REAL SIMPLE
LIFE MADE EASIER
100 GENIUS GIFTS UNDER $50
IDEAS FOR:
TEENS
TODDLERS
FRIENDS
FOODIES
PARENTS
PETS
and that guy who's impossible to shop for
OPEN ME
WHY AREN'T YOU HAPPY?!? how to take the pressure off this season
PLUS all the holiday organizing & decorating help you need
DECEMBER 2015

FOR:
HOST WITH THE MOST
JCPenney

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

EIGHT EASY TIPS FOR HOLIDAY HOSTING

1. ☑ Give guests a warm welcome with a **Crockpot** of hot cocoa.
2. ☐ Create bath kits for guests with new **JCPenney Home towels.**
3. ☐ Simmer oranges, cranberries and cinnamon in a **Cuisinart pan** for a fragrant home.
4. ☐ Crush candy canes in a **NutriBullet,** then add to coffee or sweets.
5. ☐ Keep **Royal Velvet sheets** in matching pillowcases for stylish storage.
6. ☐ Cool batches of salt dough ornaments on a **3-tier Wilton cooling rack.**
7. ☐ Warm up cookies on a **Cooks electric griddle** for a fresh-baked taste.
8. ☐ Stock up on hot cider **Keurig cups** for a happy household.

SNAP2SHOP™
now on the JCPenney app

Use the JCPenney mobile app to snap a picture of any product and buy it now.

For more inspiration at great prices, go to jcp.com/gifts.

FOR:
HOST WITH
THE MOST

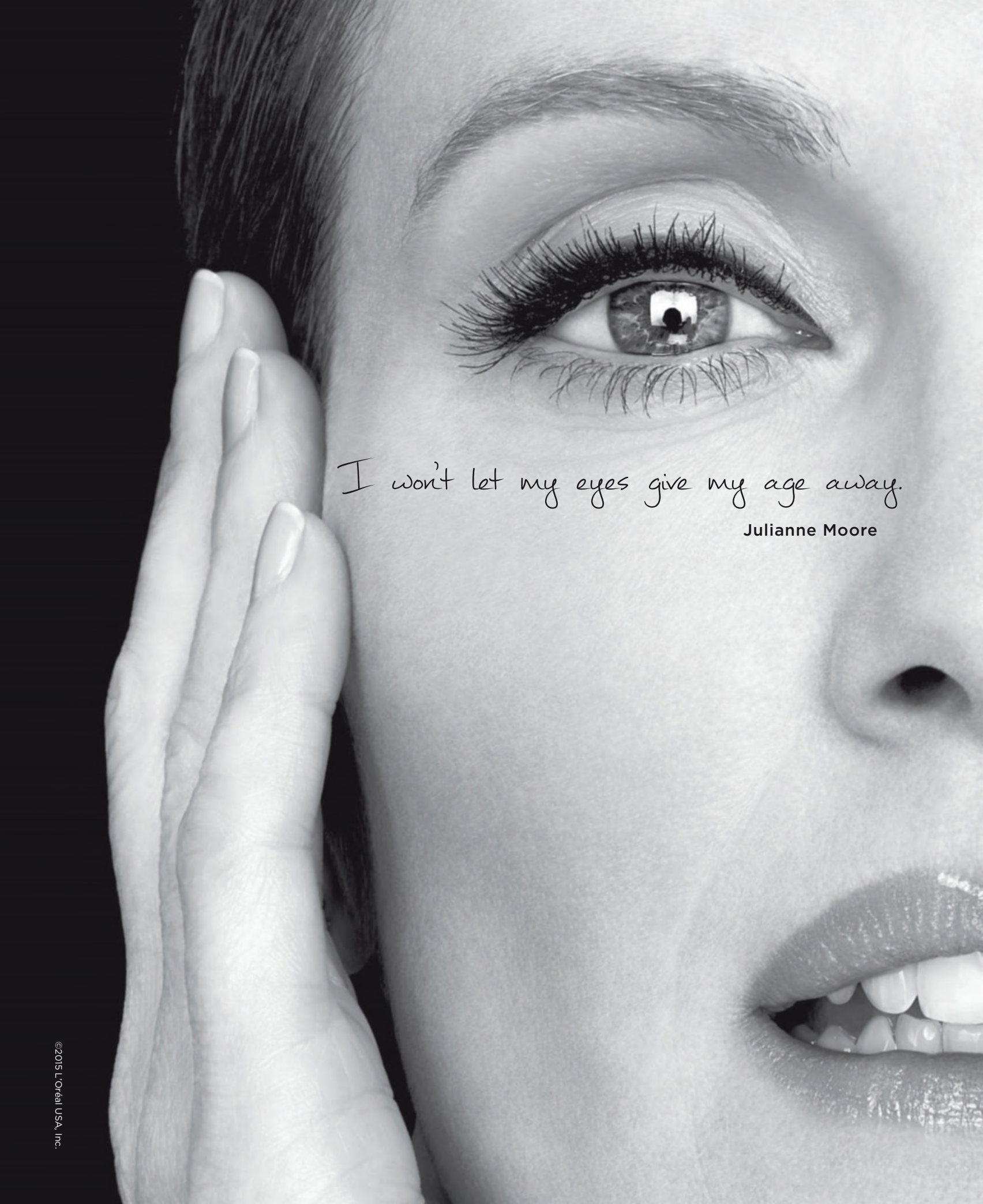
WHERE **GIVING** BEGINS

JCPenney

Shop in store or online at jcp.com/gifts

SNAP2SHOP™
now on the JCPenney app

Use the JCPenney mobile app to snap a picture of any product and buy it now. For more inspiration at great prices, go to **jcp.com/gifts.**



©2015 L'Oréal USA, Inc.

SEEING CHANGES AROUND YOUR EYES?
SEE 5 ANTI-AGING ACTIONS AT ONCE.

BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT.™

NEW

AGE PERFECT®
EYE RENEWAL

EYE TREATMENT

INFUSED WITH A POWERFUL ANTI-OXIDANT.
NOW TARGET 5 SIGNS OF AGING AT ONCE.

1. VISIBLY DIMINISHES DARK CIRCLES
2. REDUCES THE APPEARANCE OF PUFFINESS
3. HELPS REDUCE UNDER-EYE BAGS
4. MINIMIZES THE APPEARANCE OF CROW'S FEET
5. SMOOTHES THE LOOK OF CREPINESS

lorealparisusa.com

L'ORÉAL
SKIN EXPERT/ PARIS

THE
ART
OF
YOU
© 2015 Pandora Jewelry, LLC
All rights reserved • PANDORA.NET

GIVE MORE THAN A GIFT

GIVE PERSONALITY ON A SILVER BANGLE.
EXPRESSION REFLECTED IN THE FACETS OF A RUBY RED CRYSTAL.
A PRESENT WAITING TO BE OPENED.
SHARE THE #ARTOFYOU
AND EXPLORE AT ESTORE-US.PANDORA.NET

THE GIFT: HAND-ENAMELED GIFT CHARM
WITH PAVÉBOW ON .925 STERLING SILVER BANGLE

PANDORA®

NORDSTROM

HOME.

HEART.

HOLIDAY.

WHERE THE GIFTS ARE

Thoughts

"If Nature has made you for a giver, your hands are born open, and so is your heart; and though there may be times when your hands are empty, your heart is always full, and you can give things out of that."

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT, *A LITTLE PRINCESS*

Photograph by Ardelle Neubert

OFFSET

Oh! What fun.
Clear, fresh, glowing skin—every day.
That's the gift of Clinique Sonic Cleansing.
CLINIQUE
clinique.com © Clinique Laboratories, LLC

the Simple List

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF USEFUL TIDBITS, TIMELY TRIVIA, AND CATCHY CONVERSATION STARTERS

30%

How much higher the likelihood of divorce was for men who spent between $2,000 and $4,000 on an engagement ring as opposed to those who spent less ($500 to $2,000), according to a 2014 survey conducted by Emory University. Researchers combed through the answers of more than 3,000 people who were (or had been) married and found that buyers in the higher bling bracket worried about debt two to three times more than did those in the lower-cost tier. Of course, financial stress isn't the sole cause of breakups. But the survey found that for those who had spent slightly more on a ring (between $4,000 and $8,000), the stress over debt *and* the divorce rate dropped—possibly because that group was more financially well-off. December is the most popular month for engagements, so here's some advice: Don't get stuck between a rock and a hard place. You still have to pay for the wedding.

33,000

The approximate number of learning experiences involving food a human will have by age 18, writes food historian Bee Wilson in her new book, *First Bite*. (Examples: how to use utensils, how to eat a candy cane.) Wilson's statistic is based on people eating five meals or snacks a day during the formative years. With time, new challenges continue to pop up—artichoke leaves, sporks—and solutions take hold. Other fun facts in the book: A little less than one-third of people cannot smell androstenone, a pungent urine or floral smell (depending on the nose) found in fungus truffles. Some people taste soap when eating coriander leaf (cilantro). And whether or not you like a food can depend on the time of day, the season, and the location where you eat it. (Yes, wine and ice cream taste better on the couch. It's science.)

zero

How many people can avoid a hangover by drinking water directly after consuming alcohol, according to research presented at the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology conference this past August. Sorry: Hitting a greasy spoon for an egg and cheese doesn't help, either. Researchers charted the drinking habits of more than 800 students of legal drinking age and found that those who claimed to never feel sick actually just drank less—surprise!—even though many thought they were immune from hangovers. For the rest, who tried hydrating and eating to stave off a hangover, it turns out they reported feeling no different than those who just crashed into bed. The lesson: The only thing that prevents a hangover is not drinking too much. But then, you knew that. Bah, humbug!

Written by
N. Jamiyla Chisholm

Illustration by
Darling Clementine

6

The number of months a flu vaccination can keep you from getting sick, according to new research by San Diego's Naval Health Research Center. Every year, scientists examine the effectiveness of flu vaccines on new strains of the virus, but few studies have gauged how fast we lose protection. In this study, researchers analyzed data from the flu season (October to March) of the past four years and found that those who had gotten the vaccine were 50 to 70 percent less likely to visit a doctor for any flu-like symptoms for half a year—pretty much the length of flu season. And of the 1,700 people observed in the study who did complain of a fever, a cough, or a sore throat, those who had received a shot avoided getting the flu. That's nothing to sneeze at.

35 THOUSAND

The total count of red dots that the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular* wardrobe team uses to brighten the cheeks of the Rockettes for the celebrated stage show, which runs this year from November 13 to January 3, with more than 200 performances. The fake rouge—it's actually cotton fabric that's cut by machine into 1½-inch circles—is part of the costumes for the "Rag Doll" and "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers" numbers. Crew members put double-sided tape on the backs of the circles so dancers can grab a pair and quickly stick them in place between sets. Another trick the Rockettes use: Vaseline, which acts like glue to hold down the edges under the hot lights. See? Coordinated kicking is just the beginning.

FOR MORE FUN FACTS AND FIGURES, follow us on Twitter (@RealSimple).

©2015 General Motors. All rights reserved. The marks appearing in this ad are the trademarks or service marks of GM, its subsidiaries, affiliates or licensors.

PRESENTING A KITCHEN FOR THOSE WHO COOK OUTSIDE THE BOOK

Revolutionary features. Chef-inspired design. Endless potential. Behold, the completely reimagined suite of KitchenAid® appliances.

kitchenaid.com/new

KitchenAid®

®/™ ©2015 KitchenAid. All rights reserved.

Contents

EASY DIY FOOD GIFTS 184

12.2015

ON THE COVER

100 genius gifts under $50
(43)

Why aren't you happy?!? How to take the pressure off this season
(93)

All the holiday organizing and decorating help you need
(136, 168)

Cover Photograph by Levi Brown

Craft and Prop Styling by Morgan Levine

SPECTACULAR GIFT-WRAPPING IDEAS.....125

DECORATING WITH GREENS..... 168

GORGEOUS HOLIDAY LOOKS 160

Contents

THOUGHTS 8

THE SIMPLE LIST 10

EDITOR'S NOTE 23

JARS APLENTY
How to get them ready to hold delicious food gifts, page 208

Your Words

What's the most surprisingly useful gift you've ever received?.. 25

the Realist

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS
Coffee-cup sleeves 29

TREND TO TRY
Feathers 32

NOW WHAT?!?
Smart solutions for life's little disasters 34

BEAUTY SOS
Raccoon eyes 36

REAL SIMPLIFIER
Researching your roots..... 38

HOW DID WE GET HERE?
Santa Claus 40

PAGE 119

Annual Holiday Gift Guide

100 GENIUS GIFTS FOR $50 OR LESS
Plus 10 splurge items we couldn't resist including 43

Life Lessons

GOOD READ
David McGlynn says honesty is a tricky policy when it comes to kids and Santa 77

MODERN MANNERS
Catherine Newman on airplane annoyances and more.. 80

BREATHE
Relax, fast, with this month's do-anywhere exercise... 86

the Guide

HEALTH

IT'S THE HOLIDAYS: SO WHY AREN'T YOU HAPPY?
Expert advice to beat the blues..... 93

BEAUTY

PRETTY SMART 105

HOW-TO
Facial-hair removal ... 109

ROAD TEST
Red lipstick 113

FASHION

STYLE WISE
Mixable party pieces.. 119

HOME

WRAP ARTIST(RY)
Fun new ways to decorate presents 125

THE VETS WILL SEE YOU NOW
Your vexing pet questions, answered 134

ASK THE ORGANIZER
Clutter conundrums, solved..... 136

FAMILY

HELP! I'M SPENDING THE HOLIDAYS WITH MY FAMILY
Sanity-saving advice to get you through 141

QUESTION EVERYTHING
Is being *fair* really that important?..... 148

WORK & MONEY

THE VIEW FROM HERE
Nina Jacobson, founder of Color Force..... 151

MONEYWISE
How to make the most of credit-card rewards .. 154

PRODUCTIVITY PRIMER
Maximizing that three-day holiday workweek 157

Features

HEY, SUGARPLUM
Make this season merry and bright with shimmering makeup, glitzy accessories, and rich textures..... 160

CLEAN, GREEN, SERENE
From decking the halls to dressing the table, big and small ways to decorate with foliage..... 168

DOG IS MY COPILOT
A local Texas organization turns shelter dogs into service dogs (and all is right with the world) 176

EASY HOMEMADE GIFTS
Move over, chocolate chip cookies. These sweet and savory creations will wow your family and friends 184

PAGE 29

Food

5 EASY DINNERS 197

BETTER BREAKFAST
Tomato, Feta, and Dill Frittata 207

THINGS COOKS KNOW 208

A LIFE IN FULL
Connie Maltbie-Shulas: engineer, Reiki practitioner, certified herbalist, wife, mom.. 214

HOLIDAY-TIPPING HOW-TO 216

PAGE 197

Emily is wearing New Brow Define + Fill Duo in Soft Brown.
©2015 Maybelline LLC.

MAYBELLINE
MAKE IT HAPPEN™ NEW YORK

New on REAL SIMPLE.com

VISIT THE SITE FOR EXCLUSIVE IDEAS, TIPS, AND WAYS TO MAKE LIFE EASIER—EVERY DAY.

TIP
For neat slices, cut the tart while chilled, then let the wedges soften before serving.

NO-BAKE HOLIDAY DESSERTS

Our guess is that your oven, not to mention your home, is pretty full during the busy holiday season. So try one of our delicious no-bake desserts, including decadent Chocolate Caramel Tart (pictured above). Visit realsimple.com/nobakedesserts for easy recipes that you can bring to a party (or scarf down yourself).

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER
@realsimple

WE ASKED: WHEN IS IT OK TO START PLAYING CHRISTMAS MUSIC?

We polled our Facebook audience, and more than 1,000 of you answered.

61%
After Thanksgiving

7.5%
Halloween

26.5%
December 1

3%
Christmas Eve

2%
Whenever you want!

FOLLOW @REAL_SIMPLE
You tagged your coziest photos, and these were our favorites.

@JMTROVATO
Baby loves.

@LEEANNAMCGUIRE
Comfy cozy in here this afternoon.

@CATKLEIN
She's smiling. :)

All-day
relentless perfection
ends the
mirror check.

No flaking
No caking
No drying

SUPER STAY 24® COLOR

All-day color + comfort from
SuperStay 24® Color
with Micro-flex technology.

WITHOUT MICRO-FLEX:
cracks under pressure

WITH MICRO-FLEX:
looks + feels fresh

Dramatization

Available in 30 shades

Mirror check?
I don't have time for it.

MAYBELLINE.com

To get lipcolor similar to Julia's, try SuperStay 24® Color in Keep It Red.
©2015 Maybelline LLC.

MAYBELLINE NEW YORK
MAKE IT HAPPEN™

AVEDA
THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PURE FLOWER AND PLANT ESSENCES

invati™
solutions for thinning hair

3-STEP SYSTEM

1. exfoliate
invati™ exfoliating shampoo cleanses and renews the scalp.

2. thicken
invati™ thickening conditioner weightlessly thickens hair from within.

3. activate*
invati™ scalp revitalizer helps you keep the hair you have longer.**

try invati™ for FREE
Receive your 3-step **invati™** sample† at a participating location. Find your location at aveda.com/invatirs or call 866.823.1427.

*When massaged in.
**Due to breakage, in a 12-week clinical test of the invati™ system.
†One system sample per customer. Contains 10 ml invati shampoo, conditioner and scalp revitalizer. While supplies last. Come to a participating location in the U.S. or Canada to redeem.

REAL SIMPLE

GROUP PRESIDENT, LIFESTYLE GROUP EVELYN WEBSTER
CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER NORMAN PEARLSTINE

EDITOR KRISTIN VAN OGTROP
EXECUTIVE EDITOR SARAH HUMPHREYS COLLINS
DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR JACKLYN MONK
EDITOR, REALSIMPLE.COM LORI LEIBOVICH
DESIGN DIRECTOR ABBEY KUSTER-PROKELL
PHOTO DIRECTOR CASEY STENGER
DEPUTY EDITOR DANIELLE CLARO

FOOD
FOOD DIRECTOR SARAH COPELAND
TEST KITCHEN SENIOR EDITORS
JUSTIN CHAPPLE, KAY CHUN
TEST KITCHEN ASSISTANT EMILY TYLMAN
FOOD ASSISTANT HEATH GOLDMAN

BEAUTY
BEAUTY DIRECTOR HEATHER MUIR
ASSOCIATE BEAUTY EDITOR JENNY JIN

EDITORIAL
SENIOR EDITOR YOLANDA WIKIEL
ASSOCIATE EDITOR BRANDI BROXSON
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT TANYA CHRISTIAN
READER SERVICE EDITOR LORI SETO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR
ANN SAVARINO

PHOTO
DEPUTY PHOTO EDITOR KELLY CLARK
ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR EMILY KINNI
ART AND PHOTO ASSISTANT CHRISTINA NAVA

RESEARCH
RESEARCH CHIEF WESTRY GREEN
REPORTER/RESEARCHERS
N. JAMIYLA CHISHOLM, KAITLYN PIRIE
CONTRIBUTING RESEARCHER MOLLY M. GINTY

REALSIMPLE.COM
EXECUTIVE EDITOR LAURA SCHOCKER
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR ANASTASIA SIGNORETTA
DEPUTY EDITOR, FOOD SARAH KARNASIEWICZ
PRODUCER ANTIGONI GOURAS MANZI
SENIOR PRODUCER BRENDA DARGAN-LEVY
SENIOR EDITOR BRIGITT EARLEY
LIFESTYLE EDITOR SARAH YANG
PHOTO EDITOR WENDY GRANGER
ASSOCIATE EDITOR SAMANTHA ZABELL
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT GRACE ELKUS

CONTRIBUTORS
EDITORS J. I. BAKER, ELIZABETH PASSARELLA
HEALTH EDITOR CAMILLE NOE PAGÁN
SET DESIGNER JEFFREY W. MILLER

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS
FOR 24/7 SERVICE, PLEASE USE OUR WEBSITE: REALSIMPLE.COM/CUSTOMERSERVICE. YOU CAN ALSO CALL 800-881-1172 OR WRITE TO *REAL SIMPLE* AT P.O. BOX 62120 TAMPA, FL 33662-2120.

HOME
HOME DIRECTOR BETSY GOLDBERG
SENIOR STYLE AND MARKET EDITOR
RACHAEL WEINER
STAFF HOME EDITOR STEPHANIE SISCO
HOME ASSISTANT SYDNEY HERSHMAN

FASHION
FASHION DIRECTOR
VICTORIA SANCHEZ-LINCOLN
SENIOR FASHION EDITOR REBECCA DALY
FASHION ASSISTANT FLAVIA NUNEZ
CONTRIBUTING FASHION ASSISTANT
EMMA McANAW

ART
ART DIRECTOR ALYCE JONES
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR KATIE FIELD
SENIOR DESIGNERS CINDI LEE, DINA RAVVIN
DESIGNER ALEXA SPEYER

COPY
COPY CHIEF NANCY NEGOVETICH
CONTRIBUTING COPY EDITORS
SHERRILL CLARKE, PAMELA GROSSMAN

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION
EDITORIAL PRODUCTION DIRECTOR
FILOMENA GUZZARDI
EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER
ALBERT YOUNG
CONTRIBUTING PRODUCTION MANAGER
JOAN WEINSTEIN

PREMEDIA
PREMEDIA DIRECTOR RICHARD PRUE
PREMEDIA MANAGER CLAUDIO MULLER

TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCT ENGINEERING
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER
COLIN BODELL
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
JOHN NIMONS
VICE PRESIDENTS
ALAM ALI, LINDA APSLEY, TODD CHANDLER, ADAM DAYS, ROBERT DUFFY, JONATHAN FEIN, AMANDA HANES, HUGUES HERVOUET, SIMON LOXHAM, LEON MISIUKIEWICZ, KEITH O'SULLIVAN, BEN RAMADAN, ASHIS ROY, ERIC SCHOONOVER, VITA SHEEHY, JIMMIE TOMEI

TIME INC., EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENTS
JEFF BAIRSTOW, LYNNE BIGGAR, COLIN BODELL, MARK FORD, GREG GIANGRANDE, LAWRENCE A. JACOBS, EVELYN WEBSTER

Please Recycle This Magazine
Remove Inserts or Samples Before Recycling

REAL SIMPLE® (ISSN 1528-1701) IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY TIME INC. PRINCIPAL OFFICE: 225 LIBERTY STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10281. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY, AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS. (SEE DMM 507.1.5.2); NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: SEND ADDRESS CORRECTIONS TO REAL SIMPLE MAGAZINE, P.O. BOX 62120 TAMPA, FL 33662-2120. CANADA POST PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40110178. RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADA ADDRESSES TO: POSTAL STN. A, P.O. BOX 4015, TORONTO, ON M5W 2T2 GST#888381621RT0001. SUBSCRIBERS: IF THE POSTAL SERVICE ALERTS US THAT YOUR MAGAZINE IS UNDELIVERABLE, WE HAVE NO FURTHER OBLIGATION UNLESS WE RECEIVE A CORRECTED ADDRESS WITHIN TWO YEARS. U.S. SUBSCRIPTIONS: $28.95 FOR ONE YEAR. YOUR BANK MAY PROVIDE UPDATES TO THE CARD INFORMATION WE HAVE ON FILE. YOU MAY OPT OUT OF THIS SERVICE AT ANY TIME. MAILING LIST: WE MAKE A PORTION OF OUR MAILING LIST AVAILABLE TO REPUTABLE FIRMS. **CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS: FOR 24/7 SERVICE, PLEASE USE OUR WEBSITE, REALSIMPLE.COM/CUSTOMERSERVICE.** YOU CAN ALSO CALL 1-800-881-1172 OR WRITE TO REAL SIMPLE AT PO BOX 62120, TAMPA, FL 33662-2120. © 2015 TIME INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED. REAL SIMPLE® IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF TIME INC. VOLUME 16, ISSUE 11. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

AVEDA

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PURE FLOWER AND PLANT ESSENCES

thicker, fuller hair is yours

REDUCE HAIR LOSS BY 33%* with invati™ solutions for thinning hair

Invati™ is 97% naturally derived** and taps the power of Ayurveda, the ancient healing art of India, with densiplex™, an invigorating blend of ginseng and certified organic turmeric.

Try invati™ for FREE†—find a participating location at aveda.com/invatirs or call 866.823.1427.

*Due to breakage, in a 12-week clinical test of the invati™ system. **From plants, non-petroleum minerals or water. Learn more at aveda.com. †One system sample per customer. While supplies last.

Hair by Antoinette Beenders.

©Aveda Corp.

REAL SIMPLE

GROUP PUBLISHER CHARLES R. KAMMERER

PUBLISHER CECE RYAN

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER JULIE DEGARMO

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIGITAL MEG POWER

VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING KIM TAN

VICE PRESIDENT, CONSUMER MARKETING AMY BUCKLEY

GENERAL MANAGER, REALSIMPLE.COM LINDSAY JERUTIS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BRAND LICENSING TANYA ISLER

ADVERTISING SALES

MAIN OFFICE 1271 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, NY 10020 212.522.1212

ACCOUNT DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MARY ANNE McGRORY

EXECUTIVE BEAUTY DIRECTOR CARINE VINETT

INTEGRATED ACCOUNT MANAGER KELLY BREWSTER

ACCOUNT MANAGERS CHRISTINE LEUNG, JACQUELINE POLCE STOCKEL

MOBILE SALES SPECIALIST BARI SCHRAGER

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE GROUP PUBLISHER AND PUBLISHER LAURA W. COPPOLA

SALES ASSISTANTS MICHELLE BODNAR, ELLA DOVE, ALI HOWARTH

MIDWEST SALES DIRECTOR MINDY PROVENZANO

INTEGRATED SALES DIRECTOR JENNIFER LATWIS

INTEGRATED ACCOUNT MANAGER MARGARET GRAFF

SALES ASSISTANT TERESA DASBACH

DETROIT ACCOUNT DIRECTOR BARBARA ZALTZ

SALES MANAGER LAURIE FELTON

SOUTHEAST SALES MANAGER NADINE TIMPA

SOUTHWEST SALES MANAGER ALISA BEELI

SALES ASSISTANT DOREE ANTIG

NORTHWEST SALES MANAGER YOLANDE HELLER

SALES ASSISTANT RACHEL LESSER

MILAN STUDIO CAVALLINI

PRODUCTION

GROUP PRODUCTION DIRECTOR CASEY CUNNIFFE

MAKEUP, POSITIONING, AND PRODUCTION MANAGER ROSEMARIE IAZZETTA

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION SPECIALIST SWARNA PRIYA

PUBLIC RELATIONS

VICE PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS KERRI CHYKA

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS ASHLEY CALAME

PUBLICIST RAINA DEMBNER

BRAND DEVELOPMENT

DIRECTOR, PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND BRAND LICENSING STEVE ANTOSY

PROJECT MANAGER, BRAND DEVELOPMENT JACLYN CUSENZA

MARKETING MANAGER, LICENSING AND BRAND DEVELOPMENT SARA DRISCOLL

TIME INC. BRANDED SOLUTIONS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL ADVERTISING SALES MARK FORD

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS, ADVERTISING SALES AND MARKETING ANDY BLAU, PRIYA NARANG

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, SALES MARK ELLIS

VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE NANCY RYAN

VICE PRESIDENT, CORPORATE SALES EAST LAUREN NEWMAN

VICE PRESIDENT, CREATIVE DIRECTOR CARA DEOUL PERL

VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING AND SALES DEVELOPMENT CHERYL DiMARTINO

DIGITAL

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, VIDEO J.R. McCABE

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, DIGITAL KEVIN HEERY

VICE PRESIDENT DAN REALSON

VICE PRESIDENT, DIGITAL AD OPERATIONS NANCY MYNIO

VICE PRESIDENT, YIELD & PROGRAMMATIC KAVATA MBONDO

GROUP SALES

VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING JENNIFER STAIMAN

VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING AD SOLUTIONS STEVE CAMBRON

LEGAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

VICE PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL, TIME INC. STEVEN WEISSMAN

ASSOCIATE GENERAL COUNSEL MAYA MENENDEZ

VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES KATE WEISS

MARKETING SOLUTIONS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CREATIVE SERVICES ARMINE ALTIPARMAKIAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INTEGRATED MARKETING JORDAN KINGSTON

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, BRAND INSIGHTS JULIE GLUCK

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, INTEGRATED MARKETING LAUREN GERARDI

SENIOR MANAGERS, INTEGRATED MARKETING ELIZABETH DIDORA, DANA FERRARO

MANAGER, INTEGRATED MARKETING KATHARINE SHAGOURY

ASSOCIATE MANAGERS, INTEGRATED MARKETING STEPHANIE HIPP, TRICIA ISMAIL

ASSISTANT MANAGER, INTEGRATED MARKETING LANEY BOLAND

ART DIRECTORS MARIS HICKEY, COLLEEN LENNON

COPYWRITER LYZ MANCINI

DIGITAL DESIGNER SARAH ARGUS

CONSUMER MARKETING

DIRECTOR, CONSUMER MARKETING JEN CHA

VICE PRESIDENT, RETAIL ERIC SZEGDA

DIRECTOR, RETAIL AGNES CRONIN

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PLANNING RACHEL FREED

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CONSUMER MARKETING KRYSTAL HENDRICKS

SENIOR MARKETING MANAGERS KRISTIN GAUDINO, KAREN NEWLANDS

MARKETING MANAGERS HEATHER CHRISTIANSON, STEPHANIE PAGELER

ASSOCIATE MARKETING MANAGERS RACHEL KLINGHOFFER, CHRISTINA MEJIA, RANDI WEINBERGER

ASSISTANT MARKETING MANAGERS GIZELLE LUGO, CARMEN SERRATO, CHRISTINE SYMECKO

BUSINESS OFFICE

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER ALISON FRIED

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHERRY WOLFE

VICE PRESIDENTS DON LICHTER, AMY THIND

SENIOR FINANCIAL MANAGER PATTI BRASFIELD

ADVERTISING FINANCE MANAGER NANCY KIM

ASSOCIATE FINANCIAL MANAGERS LISA PRESS, COLLEEN SCHOHL

ASSOCIATE FINANCE DIRECTOR BRAD SCHARFF

PRODUCTION FINANCE MANAGER LINDA LUKE

SENIOR FINANCIAL ANALYST KYNA XU

FINANCIAL ANALYST CHRISTINE McGAFFIGAN

REALSIMPLE.COM

DIRECTOR, ACCOUNT SERVICES JAMIE KIDECKEL

SENIOR ACCOUNT SERVICES MANAGER ERIN BERGMANN

ACCOUNT SERVICES MANAGER STEPHANIE GRASSIAN

ACCOUNT SERVICES ASSOCIATES TAMMY HA, SAMANTHA SCHWARTZ

ACCOUNT SERVICES COORDINATOR MUHAYLA DOBBS

SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER MAURA CHARLES

SENIOR MANAGER, AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT ANNI CUCCINELLO

ACCOUNT MANAGERS LISA BOMBERG, NIKKI FRANCEK, ANGELA RAILE, DIANA TUR

TIME INC. INSIGHTS

VICE PRESIDENT, BUSINESS RESEARCH & INSIGHTS CARYN KLEIN

VICE PRESIDENT, CONSUMER INSIGHTS BARRY MARTIN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LIFESTYLE GROUP LEE ANNE BAER

DIRECTOR BRENDA KURITZKY

SENIOR ASSOCIATE RESEARCH MANAGER LATOYA CHRISTIAN

RESEARCH MANAGER MACKENZIE BOWER

©2015 The Container Store Inc. All rights reserved. 23778 9/15

Get Ready to Wrap, Create and Celebrate!

Looking for new ways to knock their stockings off? Visit our Gift Wrap Wonderland. You'll find the most amazing collection of stocking stuffers, wraps, ribbons, totes and more south of the North Pole. Then discover inspiration galore on our new blog, Container Stories. We'll show you easy decorating ideas, party tips, recipes and stories guaranteed to fill you with joy at containerstore.com/blog.

The Container Store®

LOCATIONS NATIONWIDE CONTAINERSTORE.COM 800-733-3532

BECAUSE SOMEDAY
I'll be the wingman.
Alert:
Fidelity Annual Review
Attachment:
Retirement Plan
Reminder:
Today
SAVE
Every someday needs a plan.SM
We'll help you make sure yours is ready for 2016 and beyond.
• We'll help you find new ways to save what you earn with a tax-smart strategy
• You'll have access to our retirement tools and expertise to help you create the right investment mix
• Together, we'll work to develop a flexible plan that can be adjusted as your situation changes
Let's build your own personal someday.
Fidelity INVESTMENTS
Fidelity.com/someday
800.FIDELITY
Investing involves risk, including risk of loss.
Guidance provided is educational.
Fidelity does not provide legal or tax advice. The information herein is general in nature and should not be considered legal or tax advice. Consult an attorney or tax professional regarding your specific situation.
The trademarks and/or service marks appearing above are the property of FMR LLC and may be registered.
Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC, Member NYSE, SIPC. © 2015 FMR LLC. All rights reserved. 734268.1.9

Editor's Note

FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM @KVANOGTROP

AS YOU CAN PROBABLY TELL from my Editor's Note picture (or from my Instagram feed), I love just about any kind of dog. But I have a particular fondness for service dogs, which explains why "Dog Is My Copilot" (page 176) made me simultaneously happy and really, really sad.

The story introduces us to Sheri Soltes, the founder of Service Dogs, Inc., which rescues dogs from shelters and trains them to become service animals. It is a happy story for me because, really, what a noble pursuit! A former (dissatisfied) lawyer, Soltes decided to change her career, founded the nonprofit, and has never looked back. She has changed many lives—human and canine—in the process.

It is a sad story for me because I used to have two service dogs of my own, and now I have one. Not far from my town there is an excellent organization called Guiding Eyes for the Blind, which releases puppies who are not cut out to be guide dogs. They are cut out, however, to be superb family pets. OK, so maybe the two Labs I've adopted from Guiding Eyes shed a bit much. And I joke that they are omega dogs in alpha bodies—honestly, any Chihuahua could take them on. And they don't retrieve or even swim, which is ridiculous and, at times, infuriating. But they are patient and sweet and have a very high EQ, if you can say that about a dog.

FROM SERVICE DOG TO LOYAL FRIEND: UKI ON THE FRONT PORCH.

Our first Guiding Eyes dog was Uki, whom we adopted 12 years ago, shortly after I started working at *Real Simple*. In the years he lived with us, many things changed in our lives. We bought another house, had another child, mourned the death of a cat, and acquired about 17 pairs of soccer cleats and 50,000 Legos, which Uki eventually stopped eating. And although Uki wasn't technically a guide dog, he did guide us in so many ways: He gave my three boys responsibility and compassion and love, which they returned in equal measure.

And he never, ever forgot that, in his heart, he was a service dog. One night my family of five went out for dinner and left the front door wide open (don't ask). We live on a busy street, full of cars and excitement and people and very enticing nighttime smells. Still, when we got home three hours later, where was Uki? Sitting in the open doorway, front paws crossed delicately over the threshold, waiting for us.

This will be our first Christmas in 12 years when the Uki stocking will be missing from the mantel. There is no perfect dog. Aside from his shedding, however, Uki was perfect. He somehow knew we could not bear the prospect of putting him down (his back legs were in rapid decline), and so he took care of things himself. He died in August, relatively quickly and relatively painlessly, on his own terms. Ah, Uki! A considerate friend until the end.

Now Uki's dog bed is in the basement and his ashes are in a (surprisingly heavy) tin. The six of us (five humans + Iggy, pictured above) are growing accustomed to his absence. And when we are feeling particularly sad, we comfort ourselves with this thought: When we go to that big house in the sky, he will be sitting in the doorway, waiting patiently to welcome us home.

Kristin van Ogtrop

PHOTOGRAPH BY PERRY HAGOPIAN; HAIR BY PAUL WARREN USING RENE FURTERER FOR ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP BY MELISSA SILVER FOR MAYBELLINE NEW YORK. BY MALENE BIRGER EMBELLISHED BLOUSE, $495, SHOPBOP.COM.

The new iPhone is here.

And only AT&T gives you the network with the nation's strongest 4G LTE signal.

iPhone 6S

With 3D Touch, Live Photos, 7000 series aluminum, A9 chip, advanced cameras, a Retina HD display, and so much more, you'll see how the only thing that's changed is everything.

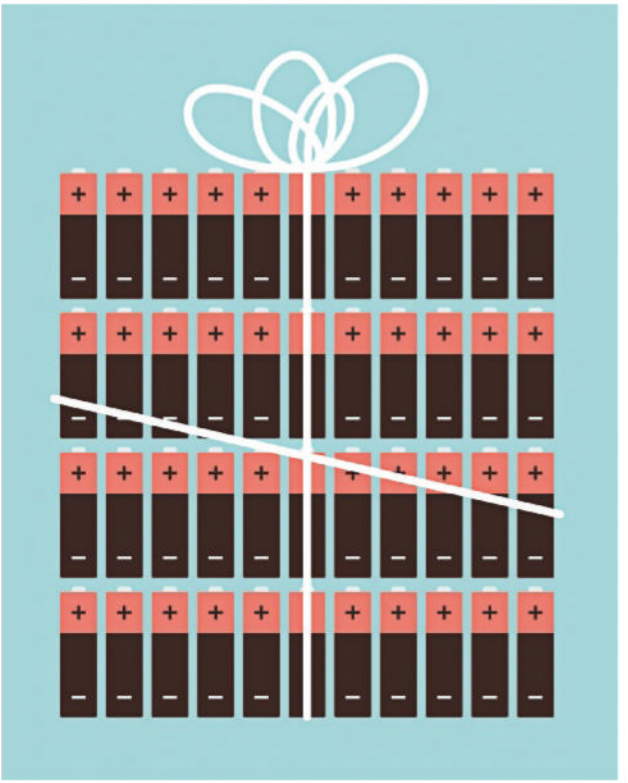
1.866.MOBILITY | att.com/iPhone | Visit a Store

Signal Strength: Claim based ONLY on avg. 4G LTE signal strength for national carriers. LTE is a trademark of ETSI. 4G LTE not avail. everywhere. ©2015 AT&T Intellectual Property. All rights reserved. AT&T and the Globe logo are registered trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property. All other marks are the property of their respective owners. Apple, the Apple logo, and iPhone are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Your Words

Q.

What's the most surprisingly useful gift you've ever received?



A.

A warehouse-club pack of AA batteries! My husband's brother gave it to us for Christmas. Our first child was about three years old, and we needed batteries all the time for toys. That was a big drain on our young-couple budget. The gift was so thoughtful that we now only give things that are purposeful or personalized.
KENDRA HOPKINS, Arlington, Texas

One year, my parents gave all their grown children fire extinguishers. Everyone was perplexed. But later it saved my kitchen after an unfortunate bacon-grease incident. Last Christmas, I gave my own adult children fire extinguishers. It's a gift I hope they never have to use.
SHERREN KOESLAG, Maberly, Ontario

In grade school, I was so disappointed one birthday to receive a small sewing kit from one of my girlfriends. My mother took me aside after the party to chide me on my poor attempt to hide my reaction to such an uncool present. But that little zippered kit, with six spools of thread, tiny scissors, and a built-in pincushion, went to college with me, across the country to a new home, and eventually to my daughter's wedding.
KAREN WELLEK SCOTT, Midlothian, Virginia

LOVE TO GIVE GIFTS THAT WILL BE TREASURED FOREVER? CHECK OUT OUR HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE ON PAGE 43.

A leather luggage tag with my name embossed on it. The friend who gave it to me passed away, and I feel like she's with me whenever I travel.
ALICE FRIBLEY ONG, Aliso Viejo, California

Our most surprisingly useful gift was a waffle iron we received as a wedding present. At first I thought it would be a waste of kitchen space and we'd never use it. Turns out it has become the center of a tradition—on Sunday mornings we make waffles and spend time together as a family.
KATIE VANBOMMEL, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

A dust mop with an extra-long handle. I was pregnant and too big to bend over.
@SUSIE6095

Illustration by Ben Wiseman

My immersion blender. It was a gift from my mom. I use it for everything: soups, smoothies, mashed potatoes, and candied yams.
L.S.C., Vancouver, British Columbia

An electric car blanket that plugs into the lighter outlet. When you live in Minnesota and come outside to a cold car that has been in your work parking lot all day, a nice, warm blanket over your legs is a big deal!
KATIE SCOTT, St. Paul, Minnesota

A pillow that's made to sit in my lap and hold my iPad. I use it every night.
@SARAHSHUTES

The nicest gift I ever received was at my wedding shower, in 1961. An elderly woman who had very little money gave me a large box of freshly laundered cleaning rags made from material she had saved through the years—towels, bathrobes, cloth diapers, etc. Each item was bleached, hand hemmed, folded neatly, and ready to use.
MYRNA DILLON, Lake Forest, California

More than 35 years ago, when I was recently divorced and struggling to become independent, the man I was dating gave me a red metal toolbox for Christmas, filled with tools for minor repairs. I was living in the first home I had ever purchased on my own, and it was the beginning of my learning how to really take care of myself. Those tools have been helpful to me through moves to five different states and more than 10 different homes.
PATRICIA M. HARALSON, Houston, Texas

An eight-cup glass measuring cup.
@CLFIELD54

SUBSCRIBER OF THE MONTH

JOYCE BIELEN
HER ANSWER: The most surprisingly useful gift was, weirdly, an electronic version of the game Battleship. I had pointed it out to my husband for the kids, but he mistakenly thought I wanted it. It sat unused for a while. Then when I was sick in bed for a week, playing it was the only thing that kept me sane. (This was back in the early 90s, before everyone had computers.)

STATS: 56; married, with two grown sons; secretary; Danville, Pennsylvania.
WHICH HOLIDAY TRADITION DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO MOST?
My husband's family gathers for a day-long brunch every year. My brother-in-law Frank and his wife, Carla, set a theme (one year the theme was France; another it was Festivus) and put together a menu and decorations to match.
HOW DO YOU STAY EFFICIENT DURING THE BUSY SEASON?
I try to wrap presents as they're bought and do some of the baking ahead of time.
FUNNIEST HOLIDAY DISASTER?
One year, we had our tree up and fully decorated about a week before Christmas. It was a thing of beauty. Somehow, overnight, it died. We came downstairs in the morning and it was just irrevocably dead. We had to totally undress the tree—taking off what seemed like a million ornaments, plus lights and garland—bring it back to the tree lot, pick out a new one, and start all over again. It was ridiculous. But I have fond memories of watching my son and his girlfriend (now his wife) valiantly decorate the tree the second time around. They were real troupers.

For Christmas, my husband bought me an umbrella that never flips inside out. Every time I battle the windy Boston streets during a rainstorm on the way to work, I am so grateful. It's the most useful present I've ever received, and I absolutely love it.
RACHEL HOUSTON BERLIN, Norton, Massachusetts

MY SON GAVE ME A DEICER FOR MY BIRDBATH. WHAT A TREAT TO WATCH THE BIRDS OUTSIDE MY KITCHEN WINDOW ALL WINTER LONG. I JUST LOVE IT.
GENEVIEVE HOLT, St. Charles, Missouri

The most useful gift I ever received was a coin sorter at a white-elephant Christmas party. My kids empty the change from my wallet and sort it. When we've saved about $200, we take it to the bank and use the earnings as family mad money.
DAWN WILLIAMS, Frisco, Texas

UPCOMING QUESTION
What is your number-one beauty rule?

Go to realsimple.com/your words and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages

©2015 Garnier L.L.C.

GARNIER NUTRISSE

—NOW—

DOUBLE NOURISHING BETTER COLOR

"YOU WANT MORE? YOU GOT IT!"
– TINA FEY IN #63

NOW 2X MORE NOURISHING CONDITIONER

NOW WITH DOUBLE THE AVOCADO, OLIVE & SHEA

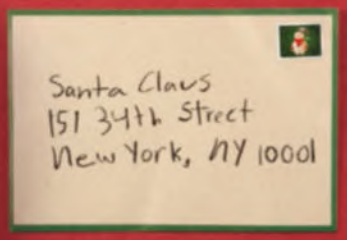
- richer, radiant, longer-lasting color
- silkier, shinier, nourished hair
- 100% gray coverage
- 56 nourishing shades

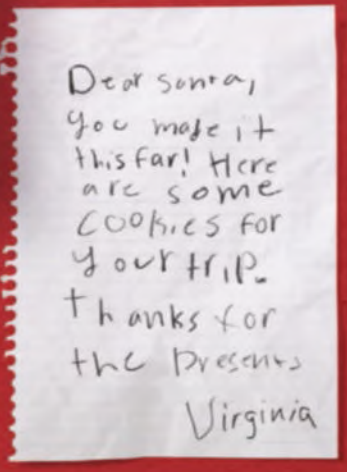
GARNIER

#WordsOfWisdom

The countdown to Christmas.

(Made possible with paper and packaging.)





Nothing helps us get ready for the holidays like paper and paper-based packaging. And that's just one way they're important to our lives. Discover how paper and packaging can make the most of your holidays and every day. **HowLifeUnfolds.com**

© 2015 Paper and Packaging Board. All Rights Reserved.

Paper & Packaging
How life unfolds:

the Realist

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR MODERN TIMES

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS

COFFEE-CUP SLEEVES

ORNAMENT STORAGE: Tuck Christmas ornaments in these protective sleeves so they don't bump against one another when stored. (Place a piece of flat cardboard on top for the next layer.)

—idea from JESS KIEFER, Blacksburg, Virginia

Photograph by Yasu + Junko

Turn the page to discover even more smart new uses for coffee-cup sleeves.

PROP STYLING BY ARIANA SALVATO

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS:

COFFEE-CUP SLEEVES

RUNNER-UP

SOCK SORTERS: Line up sleeves in a drawer to give socks, underwear, and ties homes of their own.
—idea from STEPHANIE CLONINGER, Montgomery, Alabama

RUNNER-UP

CANDLE CUTOUT: Trace a simple holiday design, like a star or a tree, onto a sleeve and cut out the shape using a box cutter. Then slide it over a glass candleholder.
—idea from MARYBETH SCHMID, West St. Paul, Minnesota

RUNNER-UP

GLASSWARE PADDING: Moving? Use latte sleeves to protect glasses in a divided packing box. This also works to cushion jars and bottles in transit.

Illustrations by Peter Oumanski

What makes mistletoe so magical?

Long before it became a signal to smooch, this festive flora was thought to possess special powers.

SIGN OF PEACE

Around 500 B.C., Druid priests in what is now France hung mistletoe over doorways to ward off evil and boost fertility. The belief was that the plant's magic would be lost if it touched the ground. Since it thrived in winter, when most living things go dormant, mistletoe was considered special. "It was treated so sacredly that if two enemies met beneath a tree on which it was growing, the foes would lay down weapons, exchange greetings, and observe a truce until the following day," says Leonard Perry, Ph.D., a professor of horticulture at the University of Vermont. (See where this is going? We know you do.)

KEY TO THE UNDERWORLD

Mistletoe gained wider attention around 20 B.C., when the Roman poet Virgil wrote about an otherworldy plant in the *Aeneid.* While on a quest to learn his future, the story's hero, Aeneas, must attain a "golden bough" (a.k.a. mistletoe) to gain entry to the underworld, says Richard Martin, Ph.D., a professor of Greek and Latin literature at Stanford University. During this time, it was believed the plant could be used not just to enter the dark world below but also as a sort of master key for all locks—and that its "seed of fire" (the white berry) provided light to travelers in the dark.

MAKE-OUT POINT

The pucker-up practice began in the 18th century, when Brits made balls with ribbon, ornaments, and mistletoe to hang from the ceiling at holiday time. If a young lady was kissed under the decoration, said tradition, a future romance or a lasting friendship was in the cards. With each kiss, a berry would be plucked from the plant, and when all were gone, the good luck—and the pecking—would cease. "Needless to say, bunches of mistletoe with plentiful berries were highly sought after," says Perry.

Written by Brandi Broxson

Photograph by Yasu + Junko

PROP STYLING BY ARIANA SALVATO

IT'S THE STOPS
THAT INSPIRE
US TO GO.
Toyota Camry | toyota.com/camry
Prototype shown with options. Production model will vary. ©2015 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.
TOYOTA
Let's Go Places

FEATHERS

Festive without being flashy, this luxe holiday look is worth investing in—it will stay stylish for years to come.

1 & 2 SPARKLING BAUBLES
Dazzling yet bohemian, these give brilliant new meaning to the term "feather earrings." Throw in the matching ring for a bigger impact. Earrings, $100, and ring, $80: estore-us.pandora.net.

3 OPULENT SHIFT
Rhinestones and black feathers lend flapper flair to an otherwise simple LBD. $248, anntaylor.com.

4 SHIMMERY CAMISOLE
A featherlight top to elevate your black pants—whether they're wide-leg trousers or skinny crops. Lauren Ralph Lauren top, $298, bloomingdales.com.

5 FANCY FOOTWORK
Champagne-hued heels are even more commanding with a swath of plumage. Badgley Mischka heels, $235, zappos.com.

6 PLUSH CARDIGAN
This fluttery sweater is a rare breed: It renders you instantly party-ready while keeping you warm and comfy. $129, chicos.com.

Written by
Yolanda Wikiel

Photographs by
Philip Friedman

SOFT STYLING BY MAI TRAN

CAN YOUR AIRLINE REWARD MILES GET YOU ANY SEAT IN THE SKY?

Earn Unlimited Double Miles

VENTURE® MILES CAN. Any flight, any airline. Find the flight you want for Honolulu or Paris or anyplace else. Fly on a Friday or a Sunday or a holiday weekend. No blackout dates. No exceptions. Isn't it about time you switched?

Capital One®
what's in your wallet?®

Credit approval required. Redeem miles for travel on any airline based on actual ticket price at time of purchase. Offered by Capital One Bank (USA). ©2015

Now what?!?

Smart solutions for life's little disasters

There's Christmas-tree sap on my clothes and floor!

JANIS FARRINGTON, via e-mail

THE FIX: Rubbing alcohol can remove sap from washable clothing, knit gloves, and rugs, says Nancy Bock, the senior vice president of education for the American Cleaning Institute. "It acts as a solvent," she says. For clothes, even a down coat, saturate the area with alcohol, let sit for a minute, then launder in warm water with regular detergent. Heat sets stains, so be sure all the sap is gone before using the dryer. Repeat the process if any remains. For sap on a wool coat or leather gloves, the dry cleaner is your best bet. For a rug, spot-test first, then apply alcohol with a cloth; blot with clean parts of the cloth until the sap is gone. Murphy Oil Soap ($4, target.com) is effective on wood floors, says Christmas-tree farmer Kathy Kogut, the executive director of the Connecticut Tree Growers Association. As for sticky fingers? Kogut says hand sanitizer works like a charm.

Written by Brandi Broxson
Illustration by Peter Oumanski

How do I get rid of the smell in my house from cooking latkes?

PAM MINKIN FISHMAN, via Facebook

THE FIX: Aside from ventilating the kitchen, fry latkes with oil that has a high smoke point (canola oil is one). Splatters contribute to the strong smell, says Sabrina Sexton, a program director at the Institute of Culinary Education, in New York City. Minimize them with a carbon splatter screen (Reo splatter screen, $20, amazon.com) placed over your pan. After cooking, wipe the stove well and simmer a pot of water and lemon peel, which will help stamp out lingering odors.

My child cries when we visit Santa.

CHARLA MOTT, via e-mail

THE FIX: First (and obviously), remember that you can skip the visit. But you can warm up little kids to Santa and make him more of a familiar face by watching some Christmas movies. "Between ages two and six, children develop stranger anxiety," says Barbara Greenberg, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist in Weston, Connecticut. Creating a wish list might help, too. That gives kids a reason to talk to the guy in the red suit. When you get to the mall, watch the scene with your child from afar. He'll see how other kids interact with Santa, and this could increase his comfort level. After a while, ask if he would like to talk to Santa about a certain toy. If he gets nervous or cries once in line or on Santa's lap, just leave and offer sweet encouragement for another try next year.

HAVE A DISASTER that needs solving? E-mail your problem to askrealsimple.com.

SPECIAL THANKS TO JOAN NATHAN, AUTHOR OF *JOAN NATHAN'S JEWISH HOLIDAY COOKBOOK*; BRIAN JOHNSON OF THE DRYCLEANING & LAUNDRY INSTITUTE; AND MELISSA MAKER OF CLEANMYSPACE.COM.

it's a 10® haircare

helping "whip" cancer

Softens
Hydrates
Intensely Smoothes
Reduces Breakage
Protects Color Treated Hair
Humidity Resistant
Nourishes Damaged Hair
Prolongs Blow Dried Style
Smoothes Frizz
Improves Elasticity

THE ONLY PROFESSIONAL HAIR CARE LINE SUPPORTING CANCER TREATMENT AND BRINGING AWARENESS TO ADVANCED SCREENING 24/7

RIGHT ACTION FOR WOMEN

Christina Applegate
Founder, Right Action for Women

it's a 10®

A portion of all proceeds goes to Right Action for Women

For more information visit:
www.ItsA10Haircare.com

Raccoon eyes

Sweat, tears, oily lids—these are all causes for under-eye smudges. Makeup artist Ashleigh Ciucci shares her secrets for keeping a look in place.

PARTYPROOF your makeup look. Go to realsimple.com/longlastingbeauty.

Written by Heather Muir

Photograph by Yasu + Junko

1. Use a lightweight eye cream.

"A rich eye cream may feel great going on at the crack of dawn, but the thick texture tends to leave behind a greasy residue, which can cause shadow, liner, and mascara to smear, especially as the temperature increases and oil production revs up," says Ciucci, who is based in New York City. Reserve luxurious creams for nightly use, and for daytime invest in a serum, like (1) Olay Regenerist Eye Lifting Serum ($23 at drugstores). You'll still get a dose of moisture without the risk of messing up your makeup.

2. Weatherproof your eye makeup.

When choosing eye makeup, opt for those labeled "waterproof," "water-resistant," or "24 hour" on the packaging. For shadow, try (2) L'Oréal Paris Infallible 24 HR Eye Shadow ($8 at drugstores). For liner, try (3) Laura Geller I-Care Waterproof Eyeliner ($20, lauragellercom). And for mascara, try Rimmel Wonder'Lash Waterproof Mascara ($8, target.com). These formulas are made to withstand humidity and stay in place, so despite the elements, your makeup won't budge. The catch: They set faster, so blend quickly. If your lids are especially oily, prep them with an eye-shadow primer, like Benefit Air Patrol BB Cream Eyelid Primer ($29, benefitcosmetics.com) or a dab of concealer to prevent the shadow from creasing and falling off.

3. Powder below your eyes.

After applying concealer under your eyes, dust on loose powder, like (4) Laura Mercier Secret Brightening Powder ($25, sephora.com), to absorb oil and reduce smudging. For emergencies, stash (5) Almay Oil-Free Eraser Sticks ($5, target.com) in your bag or desk drawer to clean up smears. They come premoistened with makeup remover to whisk away debris in seconds.

PROP STYLING BY ARIANA SALVATO; SMALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP FRIEDMAN; PROP STYLING BY MAI TRAN

clarisonic

ALPHA FIT

Sonic Cleansing Engineered for Men's Skin

SO, WHY SHOULD YOU GET YOUR MAN A FACIAL CLEANSING DEVICE THIS HOLIDAY?

HELLO.
IT'S HIS FACE.

Powerful Clean. Engineered for Men.

NEW Alpha Fit by Clarisonic cleanses away oil, sweat and grime for healthier looking skin. Compact and waterproof with two easy settings for a closer shave or cleaner beard.

Find out more at **clarisonic.com/alphafit**

Available at Clarisonic.com, Sephora, Ulta, Nordstrom, and select physicians and spas.

Researching your roots

Curious about your family tree but not sure how to go about investigating? Kenyatta D. Berry, a past president of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the star of PBS's *Genealogy Roadshow,* helps you branch out.

How do we begin the process?
Start with yourself and work backward as far as you can go. Write down names (including maiden names), dates, and locations that you know of—city, county, state. Also note any unique family traits—twins, red hair, gray eyes—and genetic disorders, such as cystic fibrosis. Then interview older relatives to fill in the gaps.

How do we organize what we learn?
Keep track of details in an ancestral chart, which is essentially a family tree. You can find a template form at Ancestry.com/download/charts.

What should you ask relatives?
Where did you grow up? Why and when did the family move? What types of jobs did your parents have? What do you know about our family's health issues? And, of course, ask them about the relatives they remember. It may help to record conversations on your phone. You can also visit your family's hometown library to view historical records.

What would you look for in the library?
Most libraries have a history and genealogy section, or a librarian can point you in the right direction—usually to newspapers on microfilm or special collections.

Where can you start searching online?
There are a few sites that offer U.S. records, such as census, birth, and marriage and death certificates. I like to use Ancestry.com, a subscription site, and FamilySearch.org, a free site run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to gain access to a variety of archives across the world. MyHeritage.com has many documents relating to Jewish heritage. Findmypast.com provides records relating to Irish, British, and Australian lineages.

How can you take your search to the next level?
DNA testing. If you haven't made much headway, this may help. Family Tree DNA, Ancestry.com, and 23andMe are well-known companies. They'll reveal your genetic background, other users with whom you share DNA, and your relationship to one another. You can order kits online to complete (with a cheek swab or by spitting in a tube) and mail back. Generally, tests cost $100 to $200.

What should you know before contacting a potential relative?
Expect that they may not respond—typically they don't. Even if they do, they may be cautious and not forthcoming with details. If you think you know how you're related, say so when you contact them. Make it clear that you're willing to share information if they choose to collaborate.

If you get serious about this, does it make sense to hire a pro?
If you've hit a roadblock or you lack access to records in another city, that can help. Go to the Association of Professional Genealogists' site [apgen.org] and search experts by location or specialty, like African-American slave genealogy, which is my focus.

Tell us about roadblocks.
The John Smiths of the world have trouble, of course. Research can be tough for anyone affected by slavery, the Holocaust, and Native American land removal. Many courthouses were burned during the Civil War, so many important records of those based in the South were lost. To top it off, not all the records that are intact are publicly available. The census is conducted every 10 years, but personal information from it is not released for 72 years. That means the 1940 records are the most recent ones we have access to. And a fire destroyed many 1890 census results.

What's the best way to share findings?
Create a book or a Google Doc telling your family's story and share it with relatives. You may want to hide names of living relatives for privacy, and you'll also want to be careful about what photos you share.

Privacy seems as if it could be an issue. Certain relatives may not want to cooperate, right?
Some want to keep the past in the past—it's too emotional to relive. Try to put a relative at ease by saying, "I understand sharing your history may be difficult. I will share only facts and keep your stories confidential." But realize that you may not be able to change the person's mind.

Why do you think it's important that we consider our families' genealogy?
People tend to feel a sense of empowerment once they learn more about their ancestors' struggles. It's more than names, dates, and places. It reveals the context of our ancestors' lives.

Written by Kaitlyn Pirie
Illustration by Peter Oumanski

The 2016 Ford Explorer Sport.
With a standard 3.5L EcoBoost® engine
that produces best-in-class V6 horsepower.*
Now nothing is holding you back.

THE NEW
2016 EXPLORER

*Class is Large Utilities based on Ford segmentation. Tested with 93-octane fuel.

SANTA CLAUS

We know him as the chubby guy from the North Pole. But the real Saint Nick was a slim Mediterranean. Here's how he evolved.

4TH CENTURY

Saint Nicholas of Myra (in modern-day Turkey) is a bishop hailed for his generosity. He's famous for having thrown a bag of gold through a window as dowries for three poor sisters. The day of his death, December 6, is still celebrated as Saint Nicholas Day in Armenia, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and other countries.

17TH TO 18TH CENTURIES

In the New World, the children of the English colonists encounter other immigrants and learn the Dutch tradition of setting out wooden shoes in which Sinterklaas (Saint Nicholas) leaves presents. They also hear of Christkindl, the (female) German gift-bearing angel, who brings gifts. The English youth mispronounce these names as "Santa Claus" and "Kris Kringle," respectively.

19TH CENTURY

The Santa narrative fills out (as does his belly): He commands a flying sleigh (Washington Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*), slides down chimneys (Clement Clarke Moore's "The Night Before Christmas"), and monitors kids from the North Pole (Thomas Nast's *Harper's Weekly* cartoons). Newfound glee for jolly Saint Nick leads to the first department-store Santa taking post at a shop in Philadelphia.

In 1897, the *New York Sun* responds to an eight-year-old's letter with the famous editorial "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus."

1912

The U.S. Postal Service provides an address for all those Christmas wish lists: "Santa Claus, North Pole, Alaska."

Due to a typo in the 1955 Sears, Roebuck and Company catalog, kids trying to phone Santa via a "hotline" end up ringing the Continental Air Defense Command.

1931

Coca-Cola solidifies Father Christmas's iconic look, decking him out in its corporate colors—red and white—plus a big belt for an ad campaign.

Illustrator Haddon Sundblom employs a friend, a retired salesman, as a model for Santa. But when the friend dies, Sundblom uses his own image to paint the big guy by looking in a mirror.

1958

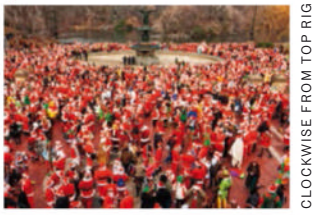
The North American Aerospace Defense Command sets up a "Santa cam" to track the jolly one's Christmas Eve ride. Today there's an app and a site (noradsanta.org).

1994

The first SantaCon, a(n overly) festive bar crawl, takes place in San Francisco. Over the next two decades, more than 300 cities, from Atlanta to Zurich, host countless rowdy revelers getting their drink on while getting their Santa suit on.

2015

Kids keep believing. In New York City alone, the number of letters to Santa that arrive at the post office annually is about half a million. If you want to preserve that innocence, be ready to change the channel when commercials come on this month for *Krampus,* a new horror movie about Saint Nick's evil alter ego.



Written by N. Jamiyla Chisholm

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: LEBRECHT MUSIC & ARTS/CORBIS; H. ARMSTRONG ROBERTS/CORBIS; ERIK PENDZICH/CORBIS; HADDON SUNDBLOM/© CORBIS; © JACK MOEBES/CORBIS; DE AGOSTINI/A. DAGLI ORTI VIA GETTY IMAGES. SPECIAL THANKS TO ADAM C. ENGLISH, AUTHOR OF *THE SAINT WHO WOULD BE SANTA CLAUS*; JEFF GUINN, AUTHOR OF *THE CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES*; DAVID KYLE JOHNSON, PH.D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AT KING'S COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA, AND AUTHOR OF *THE MYTHS THAT STOLE CHRISTMAS*; AND GERRY BOWLER, AUTHOR OF *THE WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHRISTMAS*.

Unilever
Vaseline
intensive care™
advanced repair
unscented
Clinically proven to heal
very dry skin in 5 days
with micro-droplets of
Vaseline® jelly
light
rich
FROM SCALY
TO HEALED
IN 5 DAYS
ACCEPTED
NATIONALECZEMA.ORG
National
Eczema
Association
Prescription strength
moisturization without
the prescription to
heal very dry skin.
THE HEALING
POWER OF
Vaseline
© Unilever 2015

Named after a Star. Crafted as a Holiday Gift.

Give Beautifully

StellaArtois.com
Always Enjoy Responsibly.
© 2015 Anheuser-Busch InBev S.A., Stella Artois® Beer,
Imported by Import Brands Alliance, St. Louis, MO

100 HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR $50 OR LESS

WHAT MAKES THIS PING-PONG SET SUCH A HIT? FIND OUT ON PAGE 62.

PLUS a handful over $50 that are just too good to leave out.

Written by Stephanie Sisco
Photographs by Aaron Dyer
Prop Styling by JoJo Li

ASK THE EDITORS!
Get personalized gift picks for anyone on your list by joining *Real Simple*'s #findmygift Twitter chat on Monday, November 30, from 2 P.M. to 3 P.M. Follow us on Twitter @RealSimple.

1 OLD-TIMEY MATCHES
Striking and practical, this glass apothecary vessel filled with eight-inch wooden matches is perfect for homebodies who love to huddle by the hearth.
TO BUY: Fireplace match bottle, $30, skeemshop.com.

2 PERFUME BY PERSONA
Is your teen a Performer? An Intellectual? A Rebel? These light-and-lovely scents based on sensibilities make a fun first fragrance. Choose from 12.
TO BUY: Archetypes fragrances, $50 each (use the code RS50D), archetypes.com.

3 COPPER-TOP CANDLESTICKS
For the modernist on your list, these refined table accents stand strong solo or as a pair.
TO BUY: Jansen+co candleholders, $35 (small) and $39 (large), neo-utility.com.

4 MINI ARCADE MACHINE
You'll score with this hand-held toy that offers hundreds of downloadable video games of old (like Pac-Man, Frogger, and Pole Position).
TO BUY: NanoArcade, $60, nanoarcade.net.

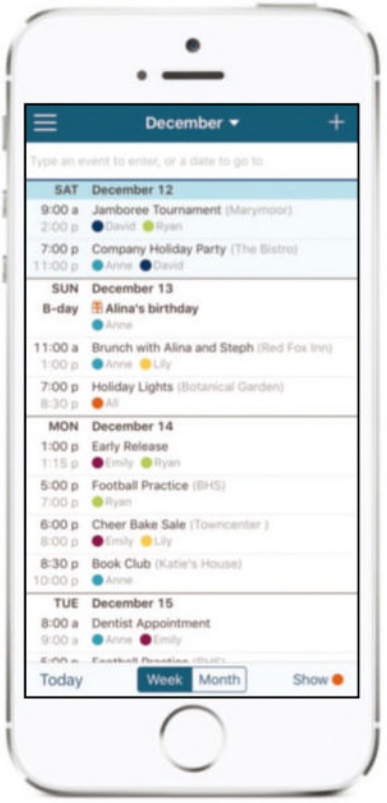
5 KEYBOARD WAFFLES
For the Sunday-morning chef with a sense of whimsy: a stovetop waffle iron that turns out generous—and hilarious—breakfasts.
TO BUY: $60 (plus $25 shipping), thekeyboard waffleiron.com.

6 SUEDE POT HOLDER
It protects from heat and adds punch to a kitchen. A great go-to for the new apartment dweller or that friend who decorates first, cooks second. In five colors.
TO BUY: Suede pot holder, $22 (large), marchsf.com.

7 METAL-DIPPED VASES
A trio of porcelain vessels in lab-inspired shapes, for "experiments" in arranging.
TO BUY: The Gold Lab shot glasses, $50 for three (use the code RSHOLIDAY), craneandcanopy.com.

8 WHITE HOUSE SOAPS
History buffs will luxuriate in these triple-milled treasures, each in a scent favored by a particular president (Washington, Eisenhower, JFK).
TO BUY: Presidential Soap Collection, $28 for a set of three, caswellmassey.com.

ADVERTISEMENT



More holiday. Less madness.

Enjoy more holiday magic and less household chaos this season with Cozi, the must-have app for your family.

- Keep track of everyone's schedules, activities, and festivities, all in one place
- Create and share lists in real time, from holiday to-do's to grocery lists and gift ideas
- Access and update from any mobile device or computer

in iTunes® and Google Play™

GET IT FOR FREE AT COZI.COM

©2015 Cozi Inc. All Rights Reserved.
All referenced trademarks are the properties of their respective owners.

Family life. Simplified. COZI

1 JUNIOR CHEF'S COAT
When the toy kitchen is getting lots of play, turn things up a notch with this authentic getup from a Michelin-starred mecca.
TO BUY: The French Laundry youth chef coat, $40, finessethestore.com.

2 ALPHABET TOY
B is for *bike; N* is for *narwhal.* Prereaders will love to match the lettered tile to its partner.
TO BUY: Hipster ABC wooden alphabet tiles, $50, treehoppertoys.com.

3 LIGHT-UP GLOVES
For the daredevil who bikes at night, hand wear that blinks with turn arrows when thumb and forefinger touch!
TO BUY: Zackees turn-signal cycling gloves, $70, zackees.com.

4 CRYSTAL EARRINGS
Sparkly drop clusters classic enough for your mother-in-law and spectacular enough for your party-girl pal.
TO BUY: Crystal-drop statement earrings, $50, anntaylor.com.

5 BARKEEP TOOL
A vintage-style bronze bottle opener/jigger/ice mallet/corkscrew for the host with a big spirit but a small apartment.
TO BUY: 4-in-1 bar tool, $30, izola.com.

6 BEER-BREAD KIT
Hearty homemade results, no skills necessary. All it "kneads" is a bottle of brew and an hour in the oven in the included ceramic dish.
TO BUY: Beer-bread mix and bowl, $37, williams-sonoma.com.

7 TECHIE TIMEPIECE
This water-resistant model from a London watchmaker rates its substantial price tag by offering smart features—text and e-mail alerts, a fitness calculator, weather warnings—in a sleek wrist piece.
TO BUY: Vector watch, from $249, vectorwatch.com.

Lindt
Lindt
LINDOR
MASTERING
IRRESISTIBLY SMOOTH
The smoothest chocolate in all the world.
Only from the Lindt Master Chocolatier.
Luscious...flowing...irresistibly smooth.
Have you felt the LINDOR melt?
Explore the art of melting at Lindt.com
MASTER SWISS CHOCOLATIER
SINCE 1845
Lindt
LINDOR
IRRESISTIBLY SMOOTH
Lindt

1 3-D GLOBE PUZZLE
A middle schooler will love this 540-piece challenge. When she's finished, she'll be on top of the world.
TO BUY: Ravensburger 3D The Earth Puzzleball, $46, amazon.com.

2 ASTRO EMBROIDERY
Teens who are tuned in to their horoscopes will appreciate this stitch-your-own-sign activity.
TO BUY: Zodiac embroidery kit, $20, miniaturerhino.etsy.com.

3 THREE-PART SERVER
A pretty marble and mango-wood caddy for any kind of topping or condiment, olives to aioli.
TO BUY: Hudson marble condiment set, $50, pier1.com.

4 LUXE-LEGS SHAVING SET
Give the beauty-product junkie her newest obsession: a glam, ergonomic gold razor with neroli or sandalwood moisturizing oil.
TO BUY: Charlotte razor set, $48, ouishave.com.

5 HOURGLASS ACCESSORY
This one-minute timer creates mesmerizing craggy art at its magnetic base as the seconds tick by. A perfect desktop de-stressor.
TO BUY: Magnetic hourglass, $20, containerstore.com.

6 FLASK-PLUS
A sleek contraption with an outdoor explorer's *(ahem)* "essentials": bottle opener, flask, shot glasses, compass, flashlight.
TO BUY: VSSL flask, $49 (use the code RS15), vsslgear.com.

7 BESPOKE SPEAKER
The powerful sound of a big system in a richly detailed portable Bluetooth version.
TO BUY: Chant mini speaker, $50, thehouseofmarley.com.

8 WOOD-TOPPED *OBJET*
For the friend who favors neutrals and natural materials, a gorgeous mouth-blown glass vessel that she'll hold on to forever.
TO BUY: Ivalo container and ash lid, $50 (small), jungleeny.com.

smile TOGETHER

Gift the ISSA™ mini and ISSA™ power toothbrushes to keep their smiles bright and their mouths healthy all year round. Because people who brush together, smile together!

- SONIC PULSE TECHNOLOGY
- EXTRA-GENTLE SILICONE
- ULTRA-HYGIENIC WAY TO BRUSH
- EXCEPTIONAL VALUE

ISSA™
FOREO

Discover our holiday offers at **foreo.com/SimpleUS**

1 COFFEE CARAMELS
Small-batch sweets with a java jolt: There are crushed espresso beans in every bite. Beautifully boxed and beribboned.
TO BUY: Hand-crushed espresso caramels, $10 for four ounces, shotwell candy.com.

2 SWANKY BOWLS
The hostess with the mostest will love this marbleized pair for dressing up everything from soup to nuts.
TO BUY: Marbleized earthenware serving bowls, $29 for two, onekingslane.com.

3 COLLEGIATE TIE CLIP
Nothing against ratty old frat tees, but here's a pick that lets him suit up with subtler school spirit. In 19 color combos.
TO BUY: Varsity Stripes tie clips, $30 each, cuff links.com.

4 CHIC CHARGER
A subtly sophisticated iPhone accessory for the style setter who can barely stand the sight of a plain cord.
TO BUY: Style Cordz of braided leather and snakeskin, $30 each, gotriplec.com.

5 ZODIAC NECKLACE
A heavenly bauble—connected crystals in the constellation pattern for each sign—sophisticated enough for a college girl and inexpensive enough for tweens.
TO BUY: Constellation necklace, $25, myjewelcandy.com.

6 LEATHER-LINED TRAY
Made of concrete, this high-end catchall is handsome, hefty, his, and hers. So luxe for the buck, you may need one for yourself, too. In black, tan, or navy.
TO BUY: Concrete valet tray, $49, owenandfred.com.

7 RING HOLDERS
Slender ceramic spires serve as a pretty perch for her favorite gems—and jazz up her dresser. In six colors.
TO BUY: Modern Ring Cones, $22 each, paperandclay studio.etsy.com.

The Gift of Giving
At Pier 1, you'll find something unique and memorable for everyone on your list—including you, of course. Shop hundreds of ideas at pier1.com.
Ho Ho Ho!
Pier 1 IMPORTS™

1 TIC-TAC-TOE 2.0
Win with a multitude of strategies, including completing rows, filling circles, and more. Ages eight and up.
TO BUY: Otrio, $40, marblesthebrainstore.com.

2 SAVORY SPREADS
For sandwiches or sauces, this peppery trio will butter up your foodie brother.
TO BUY: The Chili Butter Collection, $35 for three jars, thechililab.com.

3 TASSEL EARRINGS
These dazzlers hit a trendy note for the fashionista. (Fringe is having a moment.)
TO BUY: Elieviel chandelier earrings, $30, aldoshoes.com.

4 NAIL ART FOR NOVICES
A five-piece set of brushes and tools, plus a get-the-look guide, to help her dot, stripe, and ombré like a pro. Throw in a couple of bottles of polish for extra hugs.
TO BUY: Colour Hardware nail-art tool kit, $30, butterlondon.com.

5 QUIRKY CUFF LINKS
The cure for boardroom boredom: sleek silver-plated accessories with a get-the-ball-in-the-hole game inside.
TO BUY: Functional Soccer Field cuff links, $50, cufflinks.com.

6 CHARMING RAG DOLLS
These hand-stitched woodland creatures in artsy attire are destined to become a toddler's new everywhere companions.
TO BUY: Fashionable Fauna dolls, $25 each, anthropologie.com.

7 GOURMET POPCORN
An elevated movie-night nosh for homebodies—black-jewel kernels (a natural grain that turns white when popped) with a truffle-salt topper.
TO BUY: Ultimate Hamptons Popcorn Box, $50, sylvesterandco.com.

Naturally light and fresh taste

Lipton

be more tea

Lipton Pure Green tea is delicately blended from freshly picked, young leaves for a naturally light and fresh taste. Add a little uplift to your day.

taste good, feel good

1 ROBOT NIGHT-LIGHT
A nonbabyish motion-detecting buddy to brighten bedtime. Battery-operated, he can stand guard where needed.
TO BUY: Robot night-light, $44, momastore.org.

2 YOGA MAT FOR CATS
The attached catnip toy keeps kitty in her own spot and lets the yogi on your list practice in peace. Plus, think of the viral videos!
TO BUY: The Yoga Cat Mat, $25 (17 by 24 inches), felineyogi.etsy.com.

3 BUNNY SLIPPERS
Classics with a cozier fit, a plush faux-fur lining, and shimmer to spare.
TO BUY: Velvet bunny slippers, $24, bodenusa.com.

4 BREAKFAST BUNDLE
Ladies who (serve) brunch will delight in this set of specialized tools: grapefruit knife, milk frother, and schmear spreader.
TO BUY: Hostess Breakfast Kit Volume 3, $20, worldmarket.com.

5 COPPER-TRIM SERVER
Luxury for a steal. This rich slice of mango wood with a copper-plated handle looks as if it came from an artisan's boutique.
TO BUY: Beck serving board, $30, crateandbarrel.com.

6 SCRUMPTIOUS SNACK
For your holiday host, a decadent kit containing Champagne jelly, foie gras mousse, mini toasts, and a bamboo cutting board will ensure a repeat invitation.
TO BUY: Mousse foie gras and Champagne jelly gift set, $40, igourmet.com.

7 MULBERRY GIN
Bring your friends some holiday spirit. With notes of mulberry, raspberry, and currant, this libation is so much more celebratory than the usual bottle of wine.
TO BUY: Boodles mulberry gin, $29, reservebar.com.

8 SNOOPY HAT
A doggone adorable cap to warm up your little peanut.
TO BUY: GapKids + Peanuts Snoopy beanie, $17, gap.com.

CALIFORNIA WALNUTS

FOR THE BEST SIMPLE DINNERS EVER

A SPRINKLE OF CRUNCHY CALIFORNIA WALNUTS ADDS FLAVOR, TEXTURE AND HEART HEALTHY* GOODNESS TO ALL YOUR FAVORITE RECIPES. FOR THESE RECIPES AND MORE GO TO WALNUTS.ORG.

American Heart Association CERTIFIED Meets Criteria For Heart-Healthy Food

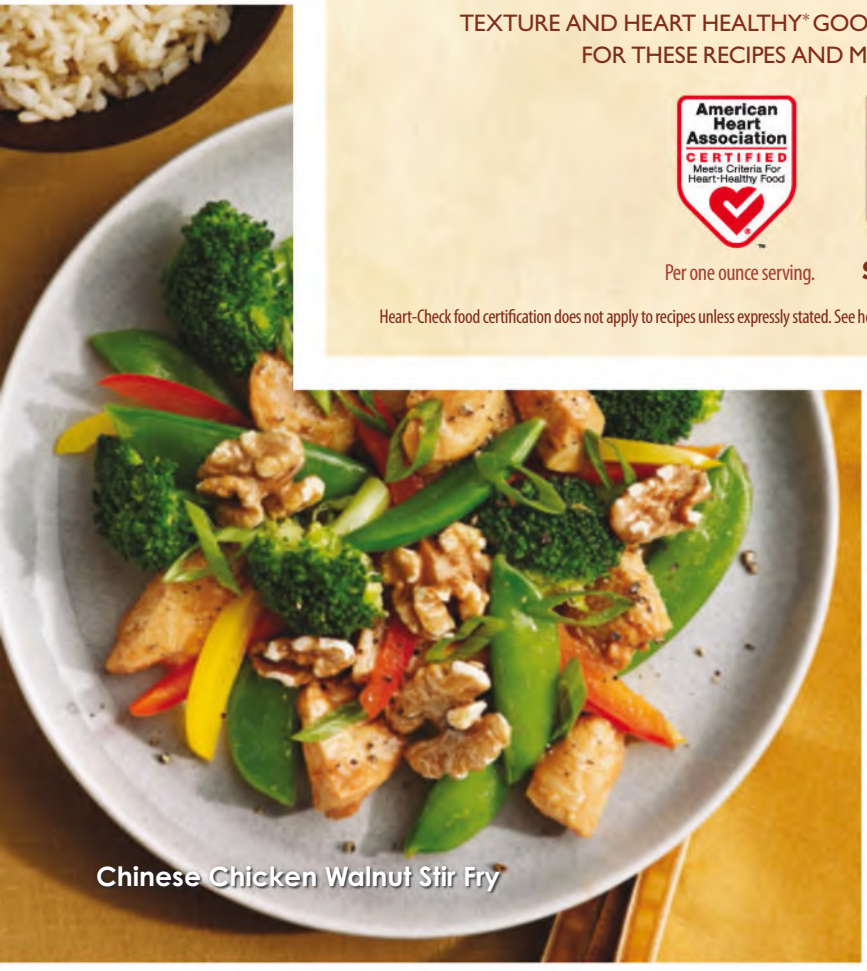
Per one ounce serving.

CALIFORNIA Walnuts

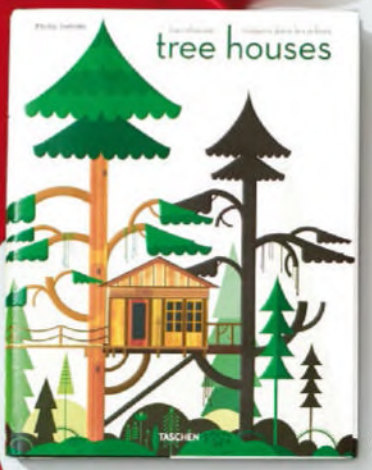
So Simple. So Good.™

Heart-Check food certification does not apply to recipes unless expressly stated. See heartcheckmark.org/guidelines.

walnuts.org



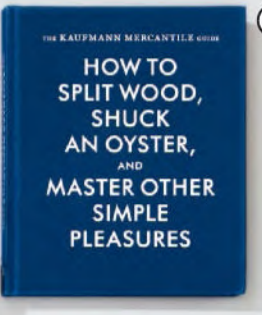
*Supportive but not conclusive research shows that eating 1.5 ounces of walnuts per day as part of a low saturated fat and low cholesterol diet and not resulting in increased caloric intake may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. (FDA) One ounce of walnuts provides 18g of total fat, 2.5g of monounsaturated fat, 13g of polyunsaturated fat including 2.5g of alpha-linolenic acid – the plant based omega-3.



1

2

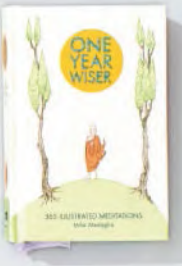
3



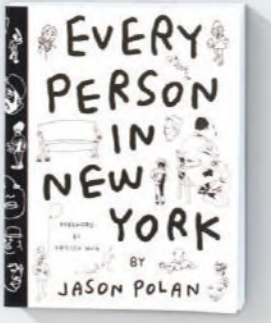
4

5

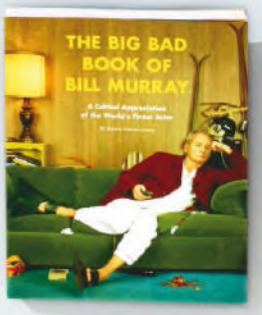
6



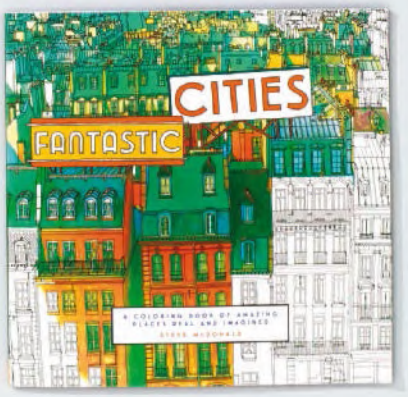
7



8



9



10

1 HOMES UP HIGH
A charming illustrated look at some of the world's most magnificent (real) tree houses.
TO BUY: *Tree Houses,* $44, overstock.com.

2 PIZZA COOKBOOK
The country's best regional recipes, in one keepsake collection.
TO BUY: *The United States of Pizza,* $30, rizzolibookstore.com.

3 TODDLER MYSTERY
Little kids will love finding clues to answer pressing questions, like "Who didn't get enough sleep?" and "Who is nervous?"
TO BUY: *Who Done It?*, $16, chroniclebooks.com.

4 LIFE MANUAL
Step-by-steps on everything from cleaning cast-iron pans to tying strong knots.
TO BUY: *The Kaufmann Mercantile Guide,* $25, kaufmann-mercantile.com.

5 COMIC-DRAWING SET
For kids ages 7 to 11, this guide with story starters and stickers helps a comics fan create 10 books of his or her own.
TO BUY: *The Superhero Comic Kit,* $20, laurence king.com.

6 DINNER-PARTY GUIDE
Fashion designer Lela Rose shares her tricks for throwing laid-back but fabulous fetes.
TO BUY: *Pret-a-Party,* $40, lelarose.com.

7 DAILY MEDITATIONS
An inspired, gorgeously illustrated book of writings from thinkers as diverse as Abraham Lincoln and the Dalai Lama.
TO BUY: *One Year Wiser,* $20, amazon.com.

8 N.Y.C. CHARACTERS
Caricatures of both notables and ordinary folk in and around the city.
TO BUY: *Every Person in New York,* $25, chronicle books.com.

9 BILL MURRAY BIBLE
A look at the legend's trajectory from *SNL* rookie to hipster icon.
TO BUY: *The Big Bad Book of Bill Murray,* $23, barnesandnoble.com.

10 COLOR-IN CITIES
For the always-doodling grown-up, an architectural coloring book.
TO BUY: *Fantastic Cities,* $15, chroniclebooks.com.

kindle
THE LOVE OF READING
WARNING
Children exposed to reading may become CURIOUS, INDEPENDENT or even develop an IMAGINATION full of wonder. In some cases children may get lost in a book, reading quietly for hours. Do not operate heavy machinery while reading.
CARRY THOUSANDS OF BOOKS | SET READING GOALS | AWARD ACHIEVEMENT BADGES
amazon

1 MELT-AWAY BISCUITS
Delectable bite-size treats, sold as a duo: one tin of spicy cheese, one of Tennessee wildflower honey.
TO BUY: Sweet and Savory two-pack, $25, willas-shortbread.com.

2 SPIKED JELLIES
Cocktail-inspired soft candies (raspberry old-fashioned, pineapple mezcal) for those of legal age.
TO BUY: Pate de Fruit, $8 a pack, craftsmanwolves.com.

3 SILK DOG COLLAR
For your pal's pup, a statement piece made of sari or kimono fabric. A portion of the proceeds benefit therapy-animal programs.
TO BUY: Vintage-sari collars by Native Dogs, $50 each (use the code RS50), shopnativedogs.com.

4 COLOR-WHEEL PUZZLE
The whole family will circle around to solve this spectacularly artful wooden mind game.
TO BUY: Spiral puzzle, $129, landofnod.com.

5 DOG-TREAT LAUNCHER
Fido loves playing fetch? He'll go wild for this gadget that catapults snacks.
TO BUY: Dog-treat launcher, $10, containerstore.com.

6 BATHTIME BUBBLY
Bring cheer to your sister with Champagne taste via this sparkly cleanser and moisturizer.
TO BUY: Molton Brown Vintage 2015 With Elderflower Collection, $33 (shower gel) and $44 (body lotion), moltonbrown.com.

7 WAND AND CROWN
Make your little princess's day with these soft, hand-sewn royal necessities.
TO BUY: Oh Baby! Leighton wand and crown, $50, stella andrubyhamptons.com.

minted.
ART HOME STATIONERY

UNIQUELY YOURS

Minted connects you with the best independent artists to bring you fresh, truly unique design you won't find anywhere else.

The Minted Envelope: US patent pending. ©2015 Minted LLC

NEW! LETTERPRESS PHOTO CARDS
"Boldly Scripted" by Alethea and Ruth

FOIL-PRESSED CARD
"Amazing Frame" by Phrosné Ras

HAPPIEST HOLIDAYS with love, the andersons
MS. ANNABEL EMERSON & MR. JAMES ASTER
2452 BRYANT STREET
APARTMENT #2
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94110

LIMITED EDITION FINE ART "Sprig Wall" by Kelly Ventura

free recipient address printing matching your card

15% OFF holiday cards
CODE: RSHOLIDAY EXPIRES: 1/1/2016
WWW.MINTED.COM

PILLOW
"Hide" by Paper Dahlia

1 FIRST HOCKEY STICK
For living-room scrimmages between dad and daughter, an 18-inch toddlerproof version of the real gear with a hand-knit cover.
TO BUY: Mini hockey stick, $32, desenfantillages.com.

2 MOD SACHETS
Filled with dried lavender, these generously sized neon-embroidered treasures are a visual and olfactory delight.
TO BUY: Dots sachet set, $36 for three, kstudio home.com.

3 SENTIMENTAL ART
Make a special unframeable memento (coral from a beach vacation, baby's first rattle) wall-ready with this brilliant souvenir saver.
TO BUY: Keepsakes 3-D frame, $35, momastore.org.

4 METALLIC MOCCASINS
She'll feel as if she's walking on clouds (above the Great Plains) in these supple slip-ons lined with faux shearling.
TO BUY: Metallic Lodge moccasins, $55, jcrew.com.

5 SEE-THROUGH BLOCKS
With noise-making beads inside, these finely crafted stackers are extra-fun to pile and topple—and are even a joy to put away in their sleek case.
TO BUY: Rainbow Sound blocks, $44, uncommongoods.com.

6 CHEEK-COLOR KIT
Thrill the makeup master with a rainbow of blushes and bronzers.
TO BUY: Sephora Collection Ombré Obsession Face Palette, $34, sephora.com.

your holiday

CUSTOM-MADE

Your photos, maps, and
children's illustrations foil-pressed
into one-of-a-kind keepsakes.

minted.

ART HOME STATIONERY

NEW! turn your
child's drawing into
foil-pressed art.

15% OFF photo & art gifts.

CODE: RSART EXPIRES: 1/1/16

WWW.MINTED.COM/COMPLETELYCUSTOM

"Hand Sketched Frame" by June Letters Studio. ©2015 Minted LLC

1 BOTTLE-CAP MAP
Beer connoisseurs can keep a visual record of favorites (perhaps by state) with fill-it-yourself hipster wall art.
TO BUY: $75, beercap maps.com.

2 PING-PONG PROJECT
The fun starts with some cardboard construction: Put the pieces together to build the table. Paddles and foam balls are included, so when the work is done, it's time for a match.
TO BUY: Cardboard ping-pong table, $110, blueribbon generalstore.com.

3 GROWN-UP BACKPACK
A nice-looking knapsack made of durable canvas, guaranteed to last 61 years, for ramblers of any age or life stage. Bonus: A portion of sales helps people in poverty.
TO BUY: Boma 13L Daypack, $39, cotopaxi.com.

4 MERMAID BLANKET
Watching *Finding Nemo* is even better when you're half sea creature yourself. This flannel-lined body cozy is waist-high (and also available in Shark).
TO BUY: Mermaid-tail blanket bag, from $50 (use the code RS15), whimsytails.com.

5 SIX-PACK STACK BAG
A sturdy-strapped beverage holder with an insulated, water-resistant lining for tailgaters and festival goers. Holds six 12-ounce cans.
TO BUY: Mountainsmith Cooler Tube, $25, mountainsmith.com.

6 "MINK" STOLE
A navy faux-fur wrap for the 21st-century Grace Kelly. Wildly soft and luxurious.
TO BUY: Faux-fur stole, $75, loft.com.

COST PLUS
WORLD MARKET
Unique, authentic and always affordable.

MAKE THE SEASON SPECTACULAR

Discover a marketplace filled with unique gifts, artisan-made decor and authentic holiday treats from around the globe —all at affordable prices.

SHOP IN STORE OR ONLINE AT **WORLDMARKET.COM**

PRICES EFFECTIVE 11/6/15–12/24/15 • SELECTION MAY VARY BY STORE AND ONLINE
ITEMS SOLD INDIVIDUALLY IN STORE MAY BE SOLD IN SETS ONLINE

COST PLUS WORLD MARKET

SAVE AN EXTRA 10% ON YOUR NEXT PURCHASE*

OFFER VALID 11/6/15–1/10/16
VALID IN STORE AND ONLINE
ONLINE OFFER CODE: WM3654

*Valid 11/6/15–1/10/16 at Cost Plus World Market stores within the United States and worldmarket.com. Not valid on alcoholic beverages, gift cards, eGift Cards, CRAFT BY WORLD MARKET merchandise, One of a Kind Rugs, delivery surcharges, and shipping fees. One-time use only. Cannot be combined with other coupons and offers. Discount will be applied to current selling price. Employees not eligible. No adjustments to prior purchases. No cash value or rain checks issued. When you return an item, you will forfeit the discount applied to that item.

To redeem online, enter promotion code WM3654 at checkout.
Cashier Instructions:
1. Scan all items. 2. Scan coupon barcode. 3. Press CLEAR. 4. Press TOTAL and complete transaction. 5. Retain coupon.

51136540001103

1 ROCKET PURSE
Zoom to the position of favorite aunt with a sparkly, out-of-this-world accessory.
TO BUY: Space-ship purse, $30, hm.com.

2 COCOA FOR CONNOISSEURS
Hot chocolate blended with ingredients like coconut, sea salt, and coffee will get a very warm reception.
TO BUY: Discover Pack of hot chocolate, $14, treehousechocolate.com.

3 HUMAN FEEDER
A treat dispenser inspired by avian dining habits. For super-fun party hosts and dorm dwellers.
TO BUY: People Feeder, $38, uncommongoods.com.

4 SCRUMPTIOUS SNACK TRIO
Supremely tasty corn puffs made of real ingredients (no chemicals): a big step up from the classic popcorn tin.
TO BUY: Cheesy Puff Trio, $16, mouth.com.

5 GLOW LAMP
A bright bulb in the bamboo base shines through whatever translucent object is put on top.
TO BUY: Baselamp, $109, lukelampco.com.

6 PARK AVENUE LEASH
Leather detailing, for the pooch pamperer on your list.
TO BUY: Rope dog leash, $50 (use the code Real SimpleLeash15), theatlanticocean.etsy.com.

7 NOVELTY NUTCRACKER
Gadget lovers will appreciate this clever *objet* and tool that keeps shells contained.
TO BUY: Nut hammer, $40, momastore.org.

8 CANDLE ON THE ROCKS
The wooden wick makes a soothing crackle as it burns; the vessel has a second life as a rocks glass. In six heady scents.
TO BUY: Cocktail Collection soy candles, $48 each, simplycurated.com.

BRILLIANT: TURNS A GLASS, A VASE, OR A VINTAGE BOTTLE INTO A LAMP.

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GETTING A FLU SHOT AND CHOOSING ONE.

CHOOSE THE FLU SHOT WITH BROADER COVERAGE.

The 3-strain flu (influenza) vaccines only cover three flu virus strains, but the 4-strain vaccines cover an additional strain. That means you may get broader coverage against the flu with the 4-strain vaccine.

ASK YOUR PHARMACIST OR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER if the 4-strain flu vaccine is right for you and your family.

CHOOSE MORE CHOOSE FOUR

Visit **ChooseMoreChooseFour.com/print** to learn more.

Available at retailers including:

CVS pharmacy

TARGET

Vaccines subject to availability. State-, age-, and health-related restrictions may apply.

Visit ChooseMoreChooseFour.com/locator to find additional vaccination locations.

gsk

©2015 GSK group of companies.
All rights reserved. Printed in USA.
476601R0 August 2015

1 THREE-OF-A-KIND GLOVES
Give your teen (heck, give *yourself!*) a pair-and-a-spare so losing one is NBD. Touch-screen capable.
TO BUY: Trio of touch-screen gloves, $38, verloop knits.com.

2 SECRET RECIPES
Satisfy the cook's appetite for insider info with these twine-bound books. Each is written by a pro and stars one ingredient (peaches, chickpeas, prosciutto).
TO BUY: Short Stack Editions, $14 each, short stackeditions.com.

3 MAKEUP-BRUSH SET
Pro-level tools in a glittery-glam container for the blushing beauty.
TO BUY: Sonia Kashuk Rising Star brush cup, $13, and Star Struck four-piece face-brush set, $30: target.com.

4 FRINGED ACCESSORY
A silky, stylish neon tassel to take a purse or a backpack from everyday to avant-garde. She'll be hooked.
TO BUY: Technicolor tassel, $40 each (seven inches), michelevarian.com.

5 007 GROOMING KIT
Concealing a shoehorn, nail clippers, and spare collar stays, this shoe brush is more than meets the eye.
TO BUY: Harvard Tie Grooming Kit, $19, gentsupplyco.com.

6 SPLASHY BIB
Fishing for a laugh? This wipeable bib will bring giggles before, during, and after meals.
TO BUY: Fishbowl Bib Slick, $24, ronrobinson.com.

7 STONE COASTERS
A sophisticated set made of brass and alabaster for the friend whose taste is (usually) out of your price range.
TO BUY: Decked Out coasters, $39 for four, westelm.com.

8 SPORTY S & P SHAKERS
For the guy who likes to play with his food: salt in one, pepper in the other, and a puck for lulls in the conversation.
TO BUY: Air Hockey salt-and-pepper set, $16, gentsupplyco.com.

Heart-smart.

49 PISTACHIOS

- 160 calories
- 6 grams protein
- 3 grams fiber

Dumb-dumb.

13 FLAVORED TORTILLA CHIPS

- 160 calories
- 2 grams protein
- 1 gram fiber

HEART HEALTHY

You don't have to go to Harvard to figure out a fistful of pistachios is more satisfying than a few measly flavored tortilla chips. It did, however, take a recent Harvard study to suggest eating nuts seven times a week or more is as healthy as it is smart. Pistachios are naturally cholesterol and trans fat free, a good source of protein and fiber, and heart-friendly. So get crackin'. And get snackin' with smarts.

Get Crackin'

Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as pistachios, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. See nutrition information for fat content. ©2015 Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds LLC. All Rights Reserved. WONDERFUL, GET CRACKIN', the Package Design and accompanying logos are registered trademarks of Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds LLC or its affiliates. WP14073

STOCKING STUFFERS

1 BRASS BOOKMARKS
Shiny place holders for readers who love good, old-fashioned paper—with packaging as artful as the gifts themselves.
TO BUY: Tom Dixon brass bookmarks, $17 each, suiteny.com.

2 EYE-SHADOW PALETTE
Four dozen shades in the palm of her hand—or the corner of her clutch.
TO BUY: e.l.f. 48 Color Little Black Book, $10, elfcosmetics.com.

3 PLANTABLE PENCILS
Writing instruments noteable for their ability to live on: When you're down to the stubby ends, put them in soil to grow basil, marigolds, and more.
TO BUY: Sprout pencils, $20 for eight, sproutworld.com.

4 HOT SAUCE TO GO
Add a dash of heat to any dish, anywhere, with a clip-on supply of sriracha.
TO BUY: Sriracha for You set, $16, sriracha2go.com.

5 BLOCK DECALS
Help a little builder bring constructions to life with windows, doors, and more. Stick on, peel off.
TO BUY: BrickStix, $5 a pack, brickstix.com.

6 PAINTERLY TATTOOS
For teens (and on-trend adults) who are into elegant ink.
TO BUY: Tattoorary temporary tattoos, from $5 each, tattoorary.etsy.com.

7 MATCHA-TEA SPREAD
The sweet, creamy concoction is delicious as a toast topper (or straight from the spoon).
TO BUY: Matcha Milk Jam, $12, craftsman-wolves.com.

8 MAGNETIC KEY RING
Help big kids keep track of their keys with this mounted system.
TO BUY: Animal key holder, $16, blueribbongeneral store.com.

9 BALM WITH BENEFITS
A cult-favorite ultra-moisturizing formula with a charitable twist—a portion of the proceeds goes to AIDS relief in Africa.
TO BUY: Suga(RED) Lip Treatment, $23, fresh.com (available December 1).

10 GLITTER GEL
No unicorns were harmed in the making of this shimmery face and body gel. Guaranteed to get laughs.
TO BUY: Unicorn Snot, $10 a jar, blueribbon generalstore.com.

A taste of home for your dog.

Introducing **cesar**® **home delights**™ brand. The meals you love, made just for them.

cesar.® love them back.®

®/™ Trademarks © Mars, Incorporated 2015. Westie image and tray shape are ® trademarks.

THINGS REMEMBERED

#CreateJoy

Just for them, only from you.

FOR HIM

FOR HER

FOR THE KIDS

Create the perfect gift at any of our 600+ stores or shop 24/7 at ThingsRemembered.com

STOCKING STUFFERS

1 EPICUREAN SOAP
Who wouldn't love sudsing up with a decadent scent? Bonus: pop-art packaging.
TO BUY: Food-scented soaps, $10 each, elizabar.com.

2 RAMEN UTENSILS
A genius hybrid for a takeout-addicted undergrad. How better to spear chicken and nab slippery noodles simultaneously?
TO BUY: Spork Chops, $4, harlemheirloom.com.

3 BABY B-BALL SOCKS
Few things are cuter than the infant in your life sporting this 70s-era legwear.
TO BUY: Mustachifier baby knee-high socks, $6 a pair, fctry.com.

4 KNIFE SHARPENER
For cooks with a pointed sense of humor, a kitchen tool with magic (trick) origins.
TO BUY: Fred and Friends Sharp Act knife sharpener, $12, amazon.com.

5 FUNNY PHOTO DOLLS
A nesting set that's as easy as 1, 2, 3 is a natural for parents of three.
TO BUY: Nesting-doll frames, $15 for a set of three, momastore.org.

6 HIP COLORING BOOKS
Tap into of-the-moment favorites *(Game of Thrones, Evolution of Beyoncé)* for every stocking on your mantel.
TO BUY: Pop-culture coloring books, $15 each, teamart.ca.

7 KRIS KRINGLE CANDY
Instead of a chocolate Santa, consider this fruit punch–flavored sucker, which also makes a sweet prop for a photo op.
TO BUY: Santa-beard lollipop, $5, papersource.com.

8 DIY ERASERS
An artsy pick for grade schoolers: 12 shades of clay to mold, then have Mom or Dad bake in the oven.
TO BUY: Creatibles D.I.Y. Eraser Kit, $12, intlarrivals.com.

9 MODERN SPIROGRAPH
Crafty types will love watching a pen form patterns as the hardwood and acrylic gears glide over the page.
TO BUY: Drawing tool, $16, hardwoodhome.etsy.com.

10 INCOGNITO JOURNAL
A pocket-size notebook for a prolific niece—disguised as a calculator to throw nosy pokes off the trail.
TO BUY: Booxi pocket notebooks, $10 each, mollaspace.com.

vitafusion™

#1 Adult Gummy Vitamin Brand†

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

©Church & Dwight Co., Inc. 2014. All rights reserved. VITAFUSION and WE MAKE NUTRITION TASTE GOOD. are trademarks of Church & Dwight Co., Inc.

†Data on file

We make Nutrition Taste Good.™ VITAFUSION.COM

GOOD READ

MAGNUM PHOTOS

Santa's dead?

After *David McGlynn* told his son that Mr. Claus was based on a real person, the boy decided to take matters (and a bit of childhood magic) into his own hands.

Photograph by Martin Parr

THE YEAR MY OLDER SON started kindergarten—our third in Wisconsin—I learned about Saint Nick's Day. Children set their shoes by the fireplace before going to bed on December 5 and wake the next morning to find their Keds and Converse filled with chocolate coins wrapped in gold foil, a small toy or two. A mini-Christmas, weeks before the big day, commemorating Saint Nicholas, the fourth-century bishop of Myra. A parent at my son's school told me that everyone in Wisconsin celebrated Saint Nick's, even the Hmong children whose families didn't observe Christmas. If our son missed it, he'd feel left out. We didn't want that, did we?

ADVERTISEMENT

THE HOLIDAYS ARE THE PERFECT TIME TO GIVE OR RECEIVE THOSE SHOES YOU'VE BEEN EYEING—LIKE THESE BOOTS FEATURED ON THE NEXT PAGE.

STEP INTO HOLIDAY STYLE

Let the fashion details make a seasonal statement during these chilly months with shoe and accessory trends presented by **DSW**.

SHOP **DSW.COM** FOR MORE STYLES

DSW
DESIGNER SHOE WAREHOUSE®

SHOW SOME LEG
UNISA / CAREANA / $69.95
COMPARE AT $99
This over-the-knee boot adds cool factor to a laid-back potluck.

METALLIC FANATIC
CONVERSE ALL STAR / METALLIC
Take a classic and give it a little festive glam, throw on for a family brunch or gift to a stylish friend.

ZIP IT UP
NINE WEST
FELYCIA / $79.95
COMPARE AT $99
The standard pump gets some style—you'll turn heads at the annual office soiree.

We didn't have a fireplace, so our sons left their shoes beneath the thermostat. The next morning, they bounded downstairs and dived for the loot. They'd each received a pair of flannel pajamas, yo-yos and Matchbox cars, parcels of chocolate coins. Two-year-old Hayden sat on the floor and devoured his entire stash, wrappers and all, until chocolate oozed down his chin. At five, though, Galen was puzzled. He studied the Christmas tree, festooned with ornaments but empty of presents. "Is this Christmas?" he asked.

"It's Saint Nick's Day," my wife said.

"Does Saint Nick work for Santa?" Galen asked. "Or does he work for God?"

Since becoming a father, I've had my misgivings about propagating the Santa Claus mythology. It's not Santa's make-believe status that bothers me, but rather how children are so heartily encouraged to believe in him when they're little, only to have the fable, and all the magical thinking Santa makes possible, later revealed as a fraud.

I remembered the day my own mother came clean that Santa was a fake. I'd had my suspicions for a while (my gifts smelled like her perfume, for example), but the revelation still felt like a betrayal. I'd been duped by my own parents, for reasons that weren't entirely clear. If anything, I'd learned to take for granted how much things cost, as well as the effort required to acquire and assemble them. It was an attitude I'd noticed my sons starting to espouse: If I threatened to take away Hayden's toys, he'd shrug and say Santa would bring him more. If Galen lost his gloves, his solution was to simply add them to his Christmas lists. In the boys' minds, Santa was a cash cow who cottoned to their every desire.

This was my chance to set a few things straight.

"Saint Nick was Santa," I said. "He was a real person who lived long ago. He protected children and helped the poor. He was so famous that everyone in Europe knew about him and talked about him long after he died."

"He died?" Galen's eyes widened and his mouth fell open. "Santa died?"

"A long time ago," I said. "More than a thousand years. We remember him at Christmas because his story reminds us to love others and be generous."

Galen stared at the tree, the lights shimmering in the ornaments. He looked suddenly wise, as though he'd grasped some fundamental human truth—about the power of stories, perhaps, the ways fables can tell us something about who we are and how we ought to live. I congratulated myself for making the truth plain. I hadn't said Santa wasn't real; on the contrary, Santa was as real as he and I, subject to the same cycles of life and death. Galen seemed to take comfort in this knowledge. He handed me one of his chocolate coins. Bursting with yuletide spirit, I unwrapped it for him.

The next week, his teacher called. "We had some trouble today," she said. "We were making holiday ornaments when Galen announced to the class that Santa was dead."

STACY YOUNG

About the author

David McGlynn's most recent book is the memoir *A Door in the Ocean.* He lives with his family in Wisconsin.

"He said that?"

"Several children cried," she said. "I've had a few parents call. Christmas is less than two weeks away."

"It's my fault," I said, trying to laugh it off. "I was telling him how Saint Nicholas was the *real* Santa Claus."

"Well, some beliefs are better kept to ourselves." Her tone was unmistakable: Rumors of Santa's demise, sprung upon a room of five-year-olds in mid-December, needed to be dispelled, pronto.

I found Galen in the living room, watching *Go, Diego, Go!* I sat down and waited for the right opportunity to broach the subject. The show, however, ran without commercial breaks, and the longer I sat mutely beside him, the less I knew what to say. *Hey, kid, remember that conversation we had last week? Turns out I was wrong: There really is a fat guy in a velveteen suit who can slow time and squeeze through air ducts. His reindeer can fly, his toys are made by elves, and your Christmas presents don't cost anything.* It sounded not only stupid but cowardly, a bald-faced repeal of the first consequential truth I'd ever told him.

Parents already tell so many lies in the course of holding things together: that we can protect them from harm or that we'll always have enough to eat, even though harm and hunger daily befall children around the world. There were times I deceived my sons not to guard their innocence but for my own convenience, because I wanted them to go to bed or stop hounding me at the store. How often is Santa invoked in order to get kids to settle down? Now that I'd let the genie out of the bottle, I didn't know how to get it back in.

I never did find a way to tell Galen that Santa wasn't dead. Thankfully, peer pressure did the work for me. Without further intervention from his parents or his teacher, Galen decided to hedge his bets and declare Santa alive again. A few days before school let out, he brought me his Christmas list, scrawled in marker on yellow construction paper, and asked me to burn it. A friend had told him Santa would read the smoke. Christmas lists sent by smoke signal were faster and more reliable than using the mail. "You're sure Santa will get it?" I asked.

"Of course," he said. "He sees everything."

I carried the paper to the kitchen sink and dug around the drawer for the lighter. Before I touched the flame to the page, I looked down at my son, hoping to gauge his seriousness. I wanted to whisper: *It's too bad the other booger eaters in your class can't handle the truth.* But as I watched Galen study the paper as it blackened, I understood why he wanted to believe. Believing in Santa is ultimately an act of community, during a season when community is paramount. Hoping we've made the "nice" list helps reassure children that they're worthy, despite their failings and misbehaviors, of the love, goodwill, and yes, even the presents that come their way during the holidays. It's not Santa's magic that children cling to and need, but his grace.

I opened the window above the sink. The smoke from Galen's charred list snaked up the wall and disappeared into the icy air.

On Christmas Eve, while my wife finished the dishes, I ushered the boys upstairs to bed. They kicked their feet inside their sheets and squealed. My wife and I would be up until after midnight assembling toys for the grand reveal the next morning. "Santa can't come until you're asleep," I said. "Stay in bed."

Galen drew an X on his chest. "I promise."

I leaned down to kiss him. "Merry Christmas."

"Merry Christmas, Dad." I backed out of his room, shut off the light. As I pulled the door shut, I heard him say, "I mean...Santa." And then I heard him giggling in the dark. ■

Believing in Santa is an act of community, during a season when community is paramount. Hoping we've made the "nice" list helps reassure children that they're worthy of the love, goodwill, and yes, even the presents that come their way.

BUCKLE UP
FERGIE
LILLITH / $139.95
COMPARE AT $180
Play with unexpected buckles and hardware to amp up your holiday outfit.

IN THE BAG
RALPH LAUREN
SWANFIELD TOTE / $99.95
COMPARE AT $198
This festive and fashion-forward print gives any holiday look that smart and polished finishing touch.

GET SOME HEIGHT
CROWN VINTAGE
SHORT WAVE / $49.95
COMPARE AT $89
This hidden wedge jump-starts a night of hot cocoa and classic flicks.

ADVERTISEMENT

SHOP
DSW.COM
FOR MORE
STYLES.
DSW.

Modern Manners

REAL SIMPLE'S ETIQUETTE EXPERT, *CATHERINE NEWMAN,* OFFERS HER BEST ADVICE ON YOUR SOCIAL QUANDARIES.

I received a thank-you note for a gift I did not give. In fact, I did not give a gift at all. I didn't even attend the party but sent a card instead. Should I let the person know that she thanked the wrong person?

M.S.

Points to your friend for sending a thank-you note at all! Demerits for sending it to the wrong person. Perhaps the gift giver was someone at the party with the same name as yours—or maybe it was the kind of present that you would be most likely to give. Regardless, don't fret. Simply ping your friend a text or e-mail: "If only I'd sent you the gift you love so much! But, alas, I think I got a thank-you note intended for someone else. I wish I could have been there to celebrate with you." And as a bonus good deed, remind your friend what she thanked you for, so she doesn't have to struggle to figure out which gift still needs acknowledgment.

My husband and I have started skiing with our 19-year-old boys. The first time we went, we also took their girlfriends, and my husband paid for everything—equipment, lift tickets, meals, etc. If we continue to go skiing with the girlfriends, is it our responsibility to keep paying for them?

J.R.

The short answer is no, it's not your responsibility to keep paying for the girlfriends. But—and you knew this was coming—the situation is more involved. Nineteen is a tricky age. The girls might still be financially dependent on their parents but in charge of their own spending money, which would probably make skiing prohibitive. And it could be that, regardless, their families simply can't afford to chip in for such an expensive hobby. (If only we were talking about mini golf!) I'm sure you would prefer not to keep shelling out so generously and extravagantly, but if you can readily

About Catherine

The author of the parenting memoir *Waiting for Birdy,* Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

THROWBACK PLAID
MIX NO. 6
DANZEY / $29.95
COMPARE AT $40
Tartan flats are a great gift for a sporty relative, or a ski weekend wardrobe full of chunky knits.

ALL THAT GLITTERS
ONE WINK
NECKLACE / $32.95
COMPARE AT $70
Give or get a statement necklace this season, for a hint of sparkle and festivity.

IN THE DETAILS
ADRIENNE VITTADINI
PELLI / $69.95
COMPARE AT $129
Dress these studded booties up—they were made for gift-exchange date night.

ADVERTISEMENT

SHOP DSW.COM FOR MORE STYLES.

DSW

COMPARE AT $189
$99.95
FRANCO SARTO LITHIUM
SPEND
A LITTLE
GIVE
A LOT
DSW
DESIGNER SHOE WAREHOUSE®

KIDS' SHOES
AVAILABLE AT
DSW.COM
SHOE LOVERS – NOT MODELS

swing it, you should. Because here's the other thing that's complicated about 19: Nobody is married yet, but if these are serious girlfriends, you should probably practice broadening your definition of family to include them. Eventually there will be women in their lives whom your sons put first, and if you make them feel as if they have to choose, they will probably not choose you. If the cost is too steep to keep everyone on the slopes, have a conversation with your sons. They might feel comfortable asking their girlfriends to chip in, or they might prefer a compromise: bringing the girlfriends but skipping a few days of lift tickets. The more seamless it is for everyone to go, the more of your sons' company you'll get to keep enjoying.

When booking airline flights, I often pay extra to choose my seat. I prefer to sit by a window so I can take photographs of the sky and the earth. Recently a parent asked if her child could switch seats with me as the child wanted to sit by a window. I hesitated because I had paid extra, but I got up and sat elsewhere. Shortly after we took off, the child closed the window. He played games on his tablet for the rest of the flight. I wish I had turned down the request. What can I say the next time?
J. M.

Like any gift, a coveted airplane seat must be offered with no strings attached. Once you give it, you maintain no claim over how it gets used. It's like your sister using the beautiful vase you bought her as a bathroom garbage bin—annoying, maybe, but not for you to decide. Besides, you don't know why the child wanted the window seat in the first place. Perhaps the aim was less to enjoy the view and more to stay clear of people coming down the aisle or to have a place to rest his head. Nevertheless, feel free to decline next time. "I'm so sorry," you can say to the child's parent. "I'm a photographer, and I paid extra for this seat so I could take pictures out the window." Because we live in a culture that tends to take special care of its children, here's my caveat: If you're going to feel rotten for the entire plane ride—worried that you were less than generous or self-conscious about being judged as such—then refusing won't be worthwhile. You'll be better off giving up the window and enjoying the righteousness of the middle or the aisle. (This was not your question, but for the record, I think it would be unconscionable to refuse the switch if the issue at hand were keeping parent and child together.)

We're expecting a baby, and my in-laws are excited to spend time with their first grandchild. I'm very appreciative of their offers to babysit, but I'm concerned about one major thing: They're terrible drivers. Both are hard of sight and hearing, and I'm frightened to get in a car with them, let alone allow them to take my baby places. How can I politely bring up this caveat to their offer to help?
C. Z.

If only we were raising kids in the good old days, like your in-laws did, when the babies just rattled around in the wayback and nobody cared! Alas. I would recommend skirting around the issue. But if you try to subtly arrange outings in such a way that the driving situation never comes up, then you are always going to worry that it will. Go with transparency instead, and take responsibility for the ensuing awkwardness: "I'm thrilled that you two want to be so involved in the baby's life, but I don't feel comfortable with other people driving her around. I'm sorry to be such a worrywart." Yes, this is a white lie—with "other people" being a euphemism for *you*—but you do want to spare their feelings. Ideally they won't be looking to catch you in a contradiction. If they pursue the issue, then know that they are choosing to make the interaction more difficult than it needs to be. Either stand your ground ("I'm sorry—this is a harder conversation than I'd hoped to have, but I'm really adamant about this") or stick your partner on follow-up duty.

Is it inappropriate to photograph the deceased at a wake or a funeral?
D. G.

Post-mortem photography was a common practice in the Victorian era, when photographs were precious and rare, and it was better to have a portrait of your dead loved one than no portrait at all. Obviously, this is no longer the case. So if you are talking about a casual snapshot—with all due respect, a coffinside selfie—then my answer is unequivocal: It's inappropriate. This is not the Grand Canyon or a surprise party; it is an occasion of mourning. Keep that phone turned off and out of sight. Be wholly present, and commit to memory the image you wish to preserve, rather than disturbing or distracting the bereaved. If, on the other hand, you have a very good reason to want that photograph—perhaps a person unable to attend the funeral asked you to take one so that he can share the experience—then ask permission of the principal mourners and find a discreet moment to capture the image. Bear in mind, though, that emotions are running high. This is one situation where I wouldn't assume that there's no harm in asking. Make sure it's absolutely imperative before bringing it up.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

Submit your social conundrums to Catherine at **REALSIMPLE.COM/MODERNMANNERS.** Selected letters will be featured on these pages every month.

SUNSHINE OR SADNESS?

WHAT GOES INTO YOUR EGG?

9 out of 10 eggs come from hens who live their lives in a space no bigger than this ad. That's not Nellie's®. Check out our chicks at nelliesfreerange.com.

BETTER LIVES FOR HENS,

MEAN BETTER EGGS FOR YOU.™

© 2015 Pete and Gerry's, LLC

Eucerin presents

SKIN SCIENCE MADE SIMPLE

LISTENING TO OUR SKIN'S NEEDS IS KEY TO MAINTAINING PROPER MOISTURIZATION.

Dermatologist **Dr. Flor Mayoral** believes in "empowering people with the tools to manage their skincare." Here, her simple checklist will help you identify most common skin concerns and find the clinically proven formula to help.

Diagnostic Checklist

Check all that apply:

- ☐ 1. Itchy Skin
- ☐ 2. Sensitive Skin
- ☐ 3. Dry, Flaky Skin
- ☐ 4. Irritated Red Patches
- ☐ 5. Eczema Flare-ups

"Being able to identify different skin needs, AND the right products to address them, is one of the easiest ways to achieve healthy looking skin."

—DR. FLOR MAYORAL, MD

If you checked the following boxes on the previous page, you'll welcome these skincare suggestions:

☑ 1. ITCHY SKIN

Cold weather, low humidity, excessive bathing and strong soaps can leave skin irritated.

To comfort skin that's dry and itchy, try **Eucerin Skin Calming Creme**. The natural oatmeal and emollient-rich formula soothes skin and provides 24-hour moisturization.

☑ 2. SENSITIVE SKIN

When you have sensitive skin, it can be unpredictable and challenging to identify the cause.

Deep and gentle moisturizing creams are perfect for the driest and most sensitive skin. **Eucerin Original Healing Creme** protects skin from moisture loss. This formula relieves dry skin associated with psoriasis and won't clog pores.

☑ 3. DRY, FLAKY SKIN

Chemicals, weather, sunlight, and detergents can all leave skin rough and flaky.

Use a lotion like **Eucerin Intensive Repair**, which doesn't just moisturize skin, but repairs it with a unique triple-action formula that gently exfoliates, hydrates for 24 hours, and fortifies skin, leaving it looking healthy and radiant.

☑ 4. IRRITATED RED PATCHES

While the exact cause is unknown, when you suffer from eczema, it's hard to imagine a day without scratching.

Eucerin Eczema Relief Body Creme's unique steroid-free formula is clinically proven to fortify dry, itchy, eczema-prone skin. With daily use, **4 out of 5 children** remained flare-up free for up to **6 months**.

☑ 5. ECZEMA FLARE-UPS

For sudden eczema outbreaks, try **Eczema Relief Flare-Up Treatment**, which instantly calms, soothes, and relieves minor skin irritation and itching due to eczema flare-ups.

Eucerin®

SKIN SCIENCE THAT SHOWS

THIS MONTH'S EXPERT

EDWARD JONES has been teaching Buddhism-inspired vinyasa yoga in New York City and internationally for a decade. Find him online at wheelandaxle.net and in person at the Shala Yoga House (theshala.com), in New York City.

Photograph by Paula McCartney

Ever notice what happens to your body when you're **rushing** from point A to point B? Especially in cold weather? Your breath gets shallow; your mind, agitated; your muscles, tight. And it's not as if all that stress dissipates when you arrive at your destination. Often your mind and body stay in rush mode, making it difficult to **be present.** To better enjoy this hectic but rewarding time of year, have this exercise in your back pocket: Sit down—comfortable but **upright,** so your breath can **move freely**—and take a few easy slow breaths through the nose. (When you're moving frantically, you end up breathing through your mouth.) Once you feel your breath **slow down** a bit, take another deep inhale—but this time when you exhale (slowly) and reach the bottom of the breath, don't inhale right away. Just wait. Try not to tense up or panic. In a few seconds, your body will **naturally initiate** the next breath. When that happens, let the inhale be full and satisfying. Once again, exhale slowly and linger at the bottom, not gripping or squeezing but **waiting patiently** until your body tells you that it's time to **inhale.** Continue this for a minute or two, letting your mind rest in the quiet at the bottom of each exhale. It will begin to feel more and more comfortable, and you might find the **pauses between breaths** growing longer. You don't need any special conditions for this exercise. At a party or a dinner, no one will know that you're doing it. Take advantage and utilize this technique anytime you want to feel calmer and **more connected** to what's going on around you.

QUEEN ANNE'S LACE SNOWFLAKE #9 FROM *A FIELD GUIDE TO SNOW AND ICE,* COURTESY OF THE SILAS FINCH FOUNDATION AND THE KOPEIKIN GALLERY

MEET THE BLOGGER: MELISSA HAWKS

In 2010, home décor and lifestyle expert Melissa Hawks founded **blog.wellappointedhouse.com**. An extension of the eponymous retail brand, it was designed to cover news in home, design ideas, DIY projects, fabric, runway trends, and lifestyle musings on travel, shopping, living well, and parenthood.

As a stylish mom on the go, Melissa enjoys her life with her husband, three kids, and their two Cavalier King Charles canines in tow. She juggles domestic life, running a shop in Greenwich, and various charity involvements, as well as her much-loved outlet of running her lifestyle site and blog. She aims to share her life, style, and how to keep it chic no matter what your busy schedule entails.

FACEBOOK: The Well Appointed House

TWITTER: @wellapp

INSTAGRAM: wellappointedhouse

PINTEREST: wellappointed

BRIGHT IDEAS

OFFERS
EVENTS
FINDS
GIVEAWAYS

COMFORT & STYLE

New Lee® Modern Series jeans with soft, slimming stretch fit your body and your style. Comfort never looked so good. Use code at checkout: REAL20—excludes Riders by Lee product. Shop now and get 20% off at **lee.com** through 1/3/16.

MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY SWEETER

This holiday season, sweeten your traditions with premium chocolate. Simply sign up to receive a free sample and get holiday cheer delivered right to your door by visiting **realsimple.com/holidaytreat**.

HORMEL® NATURAL CHOICE® DELI MEATS

Eating better should be simple. Hormel® Natural Choice® deli meats are conveniently priced and available at your local grocery store. All varieties, from ham to turkey, are 100% natural and 100% preservative-free. So go ahead, stack your sandwich high at **makethenaturalchoice.com**.

GIFT WRAP YOUR HOLIDAY BAKED GOODS

Glad® Holiday Edition food storage is the simple way to get in the holiday spirit. For a limited time, get your favorite Glad® products decorated with holiday prints, only available at Target. Download Cartwheel, Target's free app, for savings on Glad® products. Learn more at **glad.com**.

What's Cooking TODAY?

This is TODAY FOOD, a community centered on the everyday table, featuring inspiring recipes, tips and resources from your favorite chefs and TODAY hosts that will help you plan for any occasion.

TODAY FOOD

Join the TODAY Food Club at
TODAY.com/FoodClub

the Guide

HEALTH

BLUE CHRISTMAS? Expert advice to help you bounce back 93

FACIAL-HAIR REMOVAL CHEAT SHEET 109

PRETTY SMART 105

HOME

SMART PET ADVICE 134

ASK THE ORGANIZER 136

BEAUTY

GLOSSES, STAINS, AND STICKS—THE BEST RED LIPSTICKS AROUND.....113

EASY, OUT-OF-THE-BOX WRAPPING 125

FAMILY

7 FRUSTRATING FAMILY HOLIDAY SITUATIONS—AND HOW TO SOLVE THEM.....141

"THAT'S NOT FAIR!" BUT DOES IT MATTER? 148

FASHION

BUDGET-FRIENDLY PARTY-READY PIECES 119

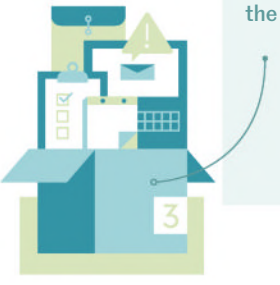
WORK & MONEY

THE VIEW FROM HERE: NINA JACOBSON 151

HOW TO PLAY YOUR CREDIT CARDS RIGHT ...154

PRODUCTIVITY PRIMER Strategies for making the most of a three-day holiday work week 157

ASK BUCKY 152



The perfectly simple snack for your perfectly complex life.

PROTEIN RICH

200 CALORIES OR LESS

GLUTEN FREE

Find your favorite flavor at PerfectlySimpleBars.com.

SNACK GOOD. FEEL GOODER.

IT'S THE HOLIDAYS: SO WHY AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

Joyful times can make you, well, miserable. But finding your way out of the blues may be easier than you expect. Here's how.

Written by Amy Paturel
Photographs by Jamie Chung

IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME of the year. Don't you feel great? Uh...no? What's wrong with you? Probably nothing. Scientific research confirms what you may already know: Many "happy" occasions are precisely when you're most likely to feel anxious, overwhelmed, and sad. While it's true that plenty of people are frazzled during the holidays, women are unduly affected, with 44 percent reporting that they're more stressed and irritated than usual, compared with just 31 percent of men, according to the consulting firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. And although you might expect to have mixed feelings about birthdays and major life events, such as retirement, many people are still unpleasantly surprised when angst far outweighs exhilaration, say the experts.

"Most festive or commemorative periods involve change. And all change, even the positive kind, potentially causes stress," says Simon Rego, Psy.D., the director of psychology training at Montefiore Medical Center, in New York City. "When you're stressed, the four activities that create a balanced life—sleeping, eating well, exercising, and spending time with people you care about—are usually the first to drop off your priority list."

What's more, "we tend to have high expectations for certain life events and set ideas about how we're supposed to feel in particular situations," says Tim Bono, Ph.D., a lecturer in psychological and brain sciences at Washington University, in St. Louis. But the very act of telling yourself, "I should be happy" or "I shouldn't be blue," intensifies negative feelings. "It's called cognitive rebounding," says Bono. "If I tell you not to think of a white bear, what animal do you immediately think of?

Attempting to ignore or repress your emotions works the same way."

To move past melancholy, "Give yourself permission to feel whatever you're feeling," says Bono. "It's actually powerful to say to yourself, 'This isn't pleasant, but it's part of life.'" Once you've done that, other minor shifts in the way you think and act can help you restore a sanguine state of mind. Here are three key times in life when you may feel anything but celebratory, and expert solutions to help you bounce back.

CELEBRATORY SLUMP No. 1

HOLIDAYS, BIRTHDAYS, AND ANNIVERSARIES

Being able to pick up on other people's emotions and expectations has helped our species survive for hundreds of thousands of years. Even so, "that emotional intelligence can make you feel bad—especially during times when others are expecting certain reactions and you don't react as they expect you will, or you feel you have to fake it to make them happy," says Alex Korb, Ph.D., a neuroscientist and postdoctoral researcher at UCLA and the author of *The Upward Spiral: Using Neuroscience to Reverse the Course of Depression, One Small Change at a Time*. "And women's brains have more gray matter in the area where there are mirror neurons—that is, brain cells that react to other people's actions as well as their own. This may make women more susceptible to mimicking and absorbing the expectations and emotions of others." (Complicated family dynamics make celebrations even more difficult, of course, as do feelings of loss or grief that tend to surface during get-togethers.)

HOW TO BOUNCE BACK

Hit your internal pause button. One way to stop ruminating about family events or festivals you're not excited by is to embrace what psychologist, author, and meditation teacher Tara Brach, Ph.D., calls "the sacred pause." Choose an activity you do daily, like washing dishes. As you're about to begin or end that activity, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and as you exhale, try to let go of the tension in your body. Centering your attention on a single moment helps you develop an ability to enjoy the here and now, says Brach.

Write down three good things about your day. Yes, you know that gratitude is good for you. What you may not realize is that it activates brain regions associated with dopamine, a neurotransmitter that influences pleasure, behavior, and motivation, says Korb.

Gratitude serves another practical purpose: "Happiness is usually linked to waiting for something to happen to you," says Janice Kaplan, the author *The Gratitude Diaries*. "But gratitude is based on your

©2015 Blue Buffalo Co., Ltd.

"We used to live with litter box odor. Now that we use BLUE Naturally Fresh, **the smell is gone."**

For most cat parents, the biggest factor in choosing a cat litter is odor control. That's why BLUE Naturally Fresh® is made from walnut shells. **In lab tests, Naturally Fresh proved to neutralize odor better than litters made of pine, wheat, corn or clay.***

And when it comes to absorption, our walnut shell litter also proved superior. In fact, because BLUE Naturally Fresh Quick-Clumping litter has up to 3x better absorbency, **one bag of Naturally Fresh can last as long as three bags of the leading clay litter**.*

What's more, BLUE Naturally Fresh is:

- Harder clumping*
- Low tracking
- Virtually dust-free
- All-natural, annually renewable, and biodegradable†

Open your heart & home this holiday

Adopt a pet near you at
home4theholidays.org/locations

NaturallyFreshLitter.com

Available in Quick-Clumping, Multi-Cat, Non-Clumping Pellet, Alpine Meadow,® Herbal Attraction,® Ultra Odor Control and Kitten Natural Training formulas.

*In separate independent studies commissioned by Blue Buffalo, BLUE Naturally Fresh Quick-Clumping litter was found to: (i) have a liquid absorption capacity at least three times greater per ounce than the leading clay-based litter; (ii) control ammonia odors better than the leading clumping litters; and (iii) form harder clumps than the leading pine, corn and wheat clumping litters.

†BLUE Naturally Fresh litter is biodegradable if composted or disposed of in a similar fashion. Landfill disposal of litter in plastic bags is not conducive to biodegradation.

attitude toward what happens, which puts you back in the driver's seat—and those feelings of control make you feel content."

Writing helps gratitude-related feelings stick. Case in point: Women who handwrote a list of what they were grateful for four times a week were happier and less stressed than were those who didn't make note of their gratitude, according to a 2015 study published in *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine.*

CELEBRATORY SLUMP No. 2

AFTER A BIG ACCOMPLISHMENT

It's not that reaching a major goal can't make you happy; it can, at least momentarily. "But the intense focus and process of working toward a goal brings the most euphoria," says Doug Jowdy, Ph.D., an assistant clinical professor of psychology at the University of Colorado Hospital Denver School of Medicine. "Striving can become addictive, and if that's what makes you feel good about yourself, it's common to feel blue when the striving is over." For example, almost 80 percent of women who lose a significant amount of weight are depressed afterward (and not only because they were living on low-calorie fare), according to a 2014 study out of University College London, in England. That's because doing—not becoming—ultimately leads to feelings of self-worth, says Jowdy.

The pursuit of long-term goals also creates changes in your brain's prefrontal cortex, the area that plays a major role in how you organize your thoughts and behaviors, reflecting what's important to you. "If you've been scheduling your days around training for a marathon, say, and then your race is over, you suddenly no longer have that organizing system for your brain," says Korb. "This can make you feel like you're floating without aim."

HOW TO BOUNCE BACK

Ask yourself, "Who am I outside of my accomplishments?" Forget where you went to school, what you do for a living, or how you spend your spare time. Are you loyal? Funny? Intuitive? "Naming your core values boosts self-compassion," says Jowdy. "That helps you get past post-accomplishment letdown, as well as disappointment if you don't meet a goal." In fact, people who practice self-compassion are more resilient in the face of depression and anxiety, according to research conducted at the University of Texas at Austin. "I spent years working on my book, *10% Happier,* half expecting no one would read it," says Dan Harris, an ABC News anchor in New York City. "But after it became a best seller, I felt kind of daunted and thought, Now what? I ultimately got out of that slump by realizing there was no point in trying to top what I had done before. The only smart move was to pursue projects about which I was passionate."

HAPPIER-HOLIDAYS TIP:
When people say things like "Don't be a Scrooge" and your blood begins to boil, remind yourself that you're feeling pressured to be happy. This will trigger brain changes that reduce the impact of guilt and sadness, research shows.

Pursue multiple mini-goals. Instead of trying to follow a big accomplishment with an equally impressive one, it may be healthier to opt for several smaller goals. "The very act of trying to make the best decision (like pursuing a life-changing achievement) stresses your brain by activating its critical and judgmental circuitry," says Korb. "The more you search, the more you uncover all the reasons why that choice may not be the right one. But choosing small, good-enough goals calms the critical-judgmental circuitry, allowing you to focus your attention and promoting happier feelings."

CELEBRATORY SLUMP No. 3

A LIFE TRANSITION

LIKE MARRIAGE, RETIREMENT, A NEW HOME, OR AN EMPTY NEST

Humans are incredibly good at adapting to new circumstances, but that doesn't mean we enjoy it. "Our brains are designed to predict things. When patterns in our lives change, emotions such as sadness, loss, and

PROP STYLING BY MEGUMI EMOTO

QUANTITIES ARE LIMITED.

RESERVE YOUR ESSENCE® BEAUTYBOX™ TODAY!

INTRODUCING

ESSENCE BEAUTY BOX

Soulful. Colorful. Beautiful.

Your beauty is unique. Your beauty products should be too.

Introducing the first-ever collection of beauty products curated just for women of color by the experts at ESSENCE® and delivered right to your door every month.

From hair and nail care to makeup and fragrance, finally a get-gorgeous tool kit that celebrates everything that's unique about you. Featuring top prestige favorites and independent beauty brands we love—each month brings the very best in beauty.

To join, visit **essencebeautybox.com/realsimple**

@essencebeautybox **@essencebeautybox** **@essencebox** **#EssenceBeauty**

©2015 Time Inc. ESSENCE is a registered trademark and ESSENCE BEAUTYBOX is a trademark of Essence Communications Inc., in the U.S. and other countries.

15AEBIAK

BRIGHT IDEAS

OFFERS
EVENTS
FINDS
GIVEAWAYS

75 YEARS OF SAVINGS

GEICO has been saving people money on car insurance for more than 75 years, and we'd love to do the same for you. Get a FREE quote at **geico.com**, call 1-800-947-AUTO (2886) or your local office.

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans, and features are not available in all states or in all GEICO companies. See geico.com for more details. GEICO and Affiliates. Washington DC, 20076. © 2015.

CREATE A KEEPSAKE ORNAMENT

Tiny Prints' personalized ornaments make a unique gift or family keepsake. This Gorgeous Glint glass ornament captures any memory with style—making any gift a thoughtful and memorable one. Create yours at **tinyprints.com**.

LITTLE TREASURES. PERFECT GIFTS.

Give a warm welcome with the perfect gift from Janie and Jack this holiday season. Sweeten first celebrations with precious designs accented with intarsia knitting, decorative buttons, and hand-embroidered details. Our cozy Fair Isle knits and soft velveteen layers keep baby bundled up in classic style from head to toe. Get baby set for frosty days with every essential, like footed one-pieces, sweater beanies, and little plush friends.

From story time by the fireside to a fancy family party, there's something for every occasion. Discover a winter wonderland of style now available in Janie and Jack shops and online at **janieandjack.com**.

BEST SKIN OF YOUR LIFE

Whether you want to smooth wrinkles, prevent breakouts, or simply have the best skin of your life, Paula's Choice Skincare has got you covered with products that keep their promises. The search for amazing skincare ends here. Finally, you've found it and more at **paulaschoice.com**.

RS LIFESTYLERS AT YOUR SERVICE

DIY masterpieces, fashion inspiration, killer recipes, and fitness motivation—all you need from the brand that gets you. Make **rslifestylers.com** one of your regular stops to discover what you should be loving, living, and sharing.

HAPPIER-HOLIDAYS TIP:
Get sentimental. Nostalgia counteracts loneliness by reminding you that you have social support, according to a 2008 study published in *Psychological Science*.

vulnerability—which are based on our brain's responses to stimuli—become heightened," notes Korb.

During times of flux, we're especially prone to feelings of guilt ("Why aren't I enjoying my retirement?") and shame ("I can't believe I married the love of my life and yet now I feel miserable"). "It sounds counterintuitive, but these emotions activate the same brain regions that light up when you win money," says Korb. "So they feel rotten but can be strangely appealing. By blaming yourself, you reinforce the belief that you have some control over the situation—and may be able to do things differently the next time."

You also may have been so busy—or so intent on wholeheartedly embracing the next phase of your life—that you didn't take the time to mark (or mourn) what you had left behind. That can lead to unexpected waves of sadness. "Sooner or later, feelings we haven't processed tend to bubble back up," says Rego.

HOW TO BOUNCE BACK

Ask yourself, Is this thought useful? "One of my meditation teachers taught me to ask myself this when I was worrying," says Harris. "It immediately allows you to see whether your rumination serves a purpose and will trigger positive behavior, or if it's just your brain, stuck in a negative rut." Identifying your thoughts and asking if they're rational is so effective that this is used as a primary strategy in cognitive behavioral therapy—a practice that's especially effective for decreasing depressive feelings and dealing with change.

Create a ritual. Rituals satisfy humans' innate hankering for routine—and increase your ability to enjoy positive experiences when you feel anything but positive. You don't even need to believe in a ritual's effectiveness to reap its benefits. For example, students who were told to eat a chocolate bar according to ritual-oriented instructions (break the bar in half without unwrapping it, then unwrap half the bar and eat it, then unwrap the other half and eat that, too) were more likely to savor it compared with a group of students who ate the chocolate any way they pleased, according to a 2013 study published in the journal *Psychological Science*. Have a cup of coffee in a certain mug at the same time every morning. Or make a daily ritual out of something you must do each day, like brushing your teeth. Going through a set, repeated process can make staid activities more pleasurable.

Be a little sappy. Go through old photos, or think of happy memories from the role or position you just left behind. "Reminiscing can help boost the production of the neurotransmitter serotonin," says Korb. Serotonin increases positive feelings now and prompts you to take positive actions (like booking a plane ticket to see your grandchild) that will make you happier in the future, too.

CHEER UP
Learn eight scientifically backed ways to be happier right now at realsimple.com/happy.

HOT

off the press

off the griddle

off the grill...

the **Griddler**!

Whatever your pleasure, the Griddler® from Cuisinart does it all! Prepare perfect pancakes, put some sizzle in your steak, or serve up a classic grilled cheese sandwich. Cleanup is simple because the reversible and removable plates go right into the dishwasher! Cook, enjoy, and clean up in no time!

Cuisinart®
SAVOR THE GOOD LIFE®

www.cuisinart.com
www.facebook.com/cuisinart

Bed Bath & Beyond • Macy's
Chefs • Bloomingdale's • Amazon

Follow us @Cuisinart

THE ART OF HOLIDAY GIVING

The holidays are a time to celebrate, give thanks, and connect with family and friends. Follow these tips from Design Mom blogger **Gabrielle Blair** on how to create the perfect gift for just about anyone on your list.

MAKE IT WITH LOVE
For a handmade gift with personal charm, use a wood burner to etch your own designs onto a set of serving spoons.

PERSONALIZE IT
A notebook monogrammed by hand is a simple, thoughtful gift idea for the creative thinkers, storytellers and sketchers on your list.

TAKE THEM AWAY
Put together a spa gift basket with items like aromatherapy salts, a sponge and **NEW AVEENO® Skin Relief Gentle Scent™ Body Wash and Lotion in Nourishing Coconut**. As gentle as fragrance-free products, they create the perfect retreat.

SWEETEN UP
A citrus- or spice-infused sugar is a sweet gift for holiday baking season. Friends are sure to think of you when they bake their next batch.

Aveeno®
ACTIVE NATURALS®
Naturally Beautiful Results®

Aveeno
ACTIVE NATURALS
Naturally Beautiful Results®
It's a simple equation.
Healthy skin equals beautiful skin.
AVEENO® Daily Moisturizing Lotion and Body Wash give your skin 2X the nourishment* when used together. The exclusive ACTIVE NATURALS® Oat formula delivers healthy-looking skin in just one day. What a beautiful difference.
*twice the nourishing oat © Johnson & Johnson Consumer Companies, Inc. 2015
Aveeno
ACTIVE NATURALS
DAILY MOISTURIZING
body wash
helps replenish skin's natural moisture
for healthier looking skin
DERMATOLOGIST RECOMMENDED
Aveeno
ACTIVE NATURALS
daily moisturizing
lotion
clinically proven to relieve dry skin
DERMATOLOGIST RECOMMENDED

IN JUST

5

DAYS*
YOU'LL SEE A

TRULY RADIANT™ SMILE

WITH A REFRESHING
TWIST OF MINT

Cleans **Whitens** **Repairs**
Strengthens Enamel

SWITCH TO ARM & HAMMER™. LOVE IT OR YOUR MONEY BACK.**

Find us on

*Data on file
**TrulyRadiant.com

PRETTY SMART

The latest beauty products and tips that save time, money, and—best of all—your sanity.

Written by
Heather Muir

Photographs by
Ralph Smith

Eye opener

No need to be intimidated by this gadget. The **Phuse Curl It Eyelash Curler** ($13, phusebeauty.com) has a comfortable, ergonomic handle (no cramped fingers), and the beveled edge gently clamps every lash without pinching. In 10 seconds, straight, stubby lashes get a major lift.

WHEN THE SILICONE PAD GETS GUNKY, SWAP IN THE REFILL TUCKED INSIDE THE HANDLE.

PROP STYLING BY SARAH GUIDO-LAASKO FOR HALLEY RESOURCES, INC.

MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU

WITH METALLIC LIPSTICKS (*SO* C-3PO), VAMPY NAIL POLISHES, AND QUOTATION-TOTING MASCARA TUBES, **COVERGIRL STAR WARS LIMITED EDITION COLLECTION** ($5 TO $8 EACH, IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY—WAIT, SORRY, AT DRUGSTORES) GIVES YOU AN EXCUSE TO GO TO THE DARK SIDE.

JUST PLAIN FUN.

Wrinkle release

Origins Three Part Harmony Oil-Infused Serum ($68, origins.com), a luxurious, lightweight product, powerfully hydrates skin with omega-rich oils. Smooth it on when you wake up to help plump lines and mimic a well-rested glow.

Build a brow

For those remorseful overpluckers: Brush **PÜR Cosmetics Browder Perfecting Brow Powder** ($22 each, purcosmetics.com) over sparse or patchy arches. The precise tip deposits tiny fibers so brows look full (not fake). In three shades.

Smart mouth

Want a brighter smile without the trouble (or the cost) of a whitening treatment? **Crest 3D White Brilliance Toothpaste System** ($15 at drugstores) buffs away stains (step 1) before you whiten (2), for a more brilliant result.

Air lift

Aerosol hair spray gets a bad rap for being sticky and stiff. (Oh no, helmet hair!) **Pantene Pro-V Airspray** ($7 at drugstores) uses water and polymers instead of alcohol, resulting in a fine mist that imparts bouncy body and flexible hold.

Face time

Tired of rummaging through your makeup bag for a rogue shadow? **Woosh Beauty's The Fold Out Face** ($80, hsn.com) holds everything you need—eye shadow, concealer, bronzer, blush, powder, and highlighter—in one slim compact.

Straight shooter

Shave crucial minutes off your morning routine with the **Revlon Pro Collection One-Step Dryer and Styler** ($50, target.com). It blasts hot air to dry hair and has massage-ball tips to smooth, saving you a step and arm fatigue.

FOLLOW THE ARROWS (AND THE STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS) TO COMPLETE YOUR LOOK.

“I WILL LIGHT UP EVERY ROOM I WALK INTO.”

©2015 P&G

OLAY REGENERIST LUMINOUS MOISTURIZER,
WITH SKIN BRIGHTENING COMPLEX,
ILLUMINATES SURFACE CELLS AND EVENS SKIN TONE.
SEE BRIGHT, PEARLESCENT, HEALTHY-LOOKING SKIN
IN JUST 2 WEEKS.

OLAY
REGENERIST
LUMINOUS

Midvinter dress in eco-cotton $138
Shawl in fine woven wool $68.
Swedish design with a green soul
MIDWINTER BLUE IN ECO-COTTON
The starry winter sky inspired this group of garments with meandering floral stems and glittering stars.
All in nature's own materials for all colorful women all over the world!
Shop direct
www.gudrunsjoden.com
Gudrun Sjödén
Stockholm | Est. 1976

Welcome to our flagship store in New York! Colorfully green on 50 Greene Street in SoHo

You can also visit our webshop or call toll free 1-877-574-1486 Free shipping, fast delivery and 30 day return policy!

FACIAL-HAIR REMOVAL TACTICS

Whether it's a patch of peach fuzz or a rogue *(ack!)* chin hair, here's a cheat sheet for getting riding of it with pluck.

Written by Heather Muir
Photograph by Yasu + Junko

PROP STYLING BY ARIANA SALVATO

THESE FACIAL RAZORS HAVE A SHARP, NOTCHED EDGE. GLIDE ONE OVER SKIN IN THE DIRECTION OF HAIR GROWTH.

POST-WAXING, RUB THIS AZULENE OIL ON SKIN TO SOOTHE IT AND REMOVE RESIDUE.

No. 1
Waxing

PROS: It removes a lot of hairs at once, and you can easily (but not painlessly) do it yourself. "It's quick, plus it works on all hair colors and textures," says Francesca Fusco, a dermatologist in New York City.
CONS: Hair needs to be a quarter of an inch in length, so you have to be patient while the stubble grows out. Waxing can cause mild discomfort, redness, and bumps. To reduce irritation, apply a hydrating gel, like Aromatica Damask Rose Soothing Gel ($18, peachandlily.com), and skip waxing if you're using a benzoyl peroxide acne medication or a retinoid.
BEST FOR: Larger areas, like sideburns.
TRY: Bliss Poetic Waxing Wax Strips Face ($25, sephora.com), which don't need heating.

No. 2
Threading

PROS: This ancient technique, performed in salons, uses a piece of thread to roll across the skin, trapping and pulling hairs. It's fast, and unlike waxing, there's no risk of double-dipping, which can lead to infections. When it's done properly, the hairs are plucked from the roots.
CONS: It is painful and somewhat costly and can be performed only by a professional. "Avoid threading when you have your period, as your skin is more sensitive then," says Fusco.
BEST FOR: Shaping eyebrows (and nixing unibrows) or removing upper-lip fuzz, because it's so precise—almost like plucking, but en masse and much faster.

SCORE SMOOTH SKIN
For top body-hair removal products, go to realsimple.com/hairremoval.

No. 3
Lasers

PROS: Lasers deactivate the hair bulbs, so eventually hair stops growing. However, some women need yearly touch-ups.
CONS: It's expensive, and it can be done only in a professional's office. "It requires about eight treatments, spaced a few weeks apart, and it doesn't work on white, blond, or fine hair, because the laser targets pigment in the follicles," says Fusco. It's mildly uncomfortable (like snaps of a rubber band), and when not done properly, there's a risk of thermal burn.
BEST FOR: Any hair on the face (upper lip, cheeks, chin, neck), except very close to the eyes.

No. 4
Shaving

PROS: It's easy, you can do it almost anywhere, and there are new specialty razors made to target small areas. It also takes off dead skin, so it doubles as an exfoliating treatment. FYI: "The hair won't grow back thicker," says Fusco.
CONS: The hair does grow back quickly, however. Make sure to use a clean razor (not the one you use on your legs). With a regular razor, prep your skin with a foaming face wash. If you have a facial razor, use it on dry skin (or follow the package directions).
BEST FOR: Fuzz on the chin and the upper lip, and shaping brows. Great if you have a low pain tolerance or sensitive skin.
TRY: Tinkle by Fromm Eyebrow Razor, $6, sallybeauty.com.

No. 5
Tweezing

PROS: The most targeted treatment. It's easy, and you can do it yourself. "Anecdotally, we've found that hair grows back finer or not at all due to the trauma," says Fusco.
CONS: It's time-consuming, and if you don't pluck correctly, hairs can break and become ingrown. To avoid this, pull each hair in the direction it's growing. Skip plucking close to the eyes and the nose, which contains bacteria and is prone to infections.
TRY: Tweezerman Slant Tweezer, $23, tweezerman.com. Mail it back to the company for free sharpening.
BEST FOR: Stubborn chin hairs that seem to sprout in the same places.

THIS PAGE: PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIP FRIEDMAN; PROP STYLING BY MAI TRAN

Great gifts are always personal.

Wrap it up your way…

Dress up your gift with fun toppers:

- Add a memorable ornament, bath loofah, candy or even their favorite travel-size product. Tape or tie with decorative ribbon and your gift is singing.

Think outside the box:

- Use new PJs or a T-shirt as wrapping paper. Simply fold around the Gift Pack, tie a ribbon and it'll be perfect.

Save more.

cartwheel™

Target savings, mobile style.

Dove, Dove Men+Care, AXE®, Caress® and Vaseline® Gift Packs.

Offer valid thru 12/23/15.

AVAILABLE AT TARGET.

©2015 Unilever TGT15218

Saving People Money Since 1936

... that's before there were nylons.

GEICO has been serving up great car insurance and fantastic customer service for more than 75 years. Get a quote and see how much you could save today.

geico.com | 1-800-947-AUTO | local office

GEICO®

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or all GEICO companies. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. © 2015 GEICO

RED LIP COLOR

It's a year-round classic and a holiday-look staple. Here, the six best ways to go bold.

Written by Jenny Jin
Photograph by Ralph Smith

REAL SIMPLE
ROAD TEST

1 BEST GLOSS
Make Up For Ever Artist Plexi-Gloss
Forget hair-grabbing formulas with barely-there pigment. This lightweight liquid delivers a noticeable amount of color and shine that stays put without feeling tacky.
TO BUY: $19, makeupforever.com.

2 BEST MATTE
L'Oréal Paris Colour Riche Le Matte Lip Pen
The best thing about matte lipstick is its longevity. The worst? Dryness. This pen contains argan oil, so you get color that lasts through lunch and lips that feel plush, not parched.
TO BUY: $10 at drugstores.

3 BEST SPLURGE
Bobbi Brown Luxe Lip Color
From the gilded tube to the vitamin E–laced formula, this creamy crimson looks and feels decadent—even after hours of wear. Bonus: It has plumping peptides to smooth out any lines.
TO BUY: $35, bobbibrowncosmetics.com.

4 BEST BUDGET
Wet n' Wild Mega Shield SPF 15 Lip Color
Hydrating avocado oil plus serious color payoff equals vibrant, velvety lips for less than the price of a latte. "It's my not-so-guilty pleasure," said a tester.
TO BUY: $3 at drugstores.

5 BEST BALM
Wander Beauty Love Lock Hydrating Lip Gel
This sheer salve tints lips with just enough color to brighten up your face without looking too "made-up." The balmy formula is easy to apply—no mirrors or brushes needed.
TO BUY: $24, wanderbeauty.com.

6 LONGEST-LASTING
Dose of Colors Matte Lipstick
"It's the lipstick you can leave at home," a tester raved. This pigmented pick goes on like a gloss and sets into a satiny stain that won't budge.
TO BUY: $18, rickysnyc.com.

FIND YOUR SHADE

Poppy King, the founder of Lipstick Queen, offers these tips.
- **The darker your natural coloring (skin, hair, eyes), the cooler you should go. Think pinkish reds and plums.**
- **If you're fairer overall, try an orangey red instead.**
- **Not happy with your shade? Blot your lips and layer on a gloss in a contrasting color.**

GOOP-FREE GLOSS: THE SPLIT-TIP APPLICATOR PREVENTS YOU FROM GETTING TOO MUCH.

THIS CULT-FAVORITE BRAND HAS NEARLY 1 MILLION INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS.

PROP STYLING BY SARAH GUIDO-LAASKO FOR HALLEY RESOURCES, INC.

SOMETHING
Sweet To delight

SOMETHING
SPICY TO EXCITE

Something
BOLD TO SATISFY

©2015 STACY'S PITA CHIP COMPANY, INC.

STYLE WISE

From a fabulous faux-fur collar to sparkling shoes, these festive finds will mix (and remix) to deck you out divinely for everything on your holiday calendar. Relax—you know what you're wearing to the party.

EVERY ITEM UNDER $169!

Written by
Rebecca Daly
Photographs by
Jessica Antola

HAIR BY MARK ANTHONY USING PHYTO PARIS FOR JUDY CASEY INC.; MAKEUP BY GLENN MARZIALI USING DIORSHOW AT FACTORY DOWNTOWN

SILVER LININGS

Delight is in the details. Feather trim and metallic brocade bring party personality to simple silhouettes. Take the same little black top incognito to another event by tucking the plumed hem into a scene-stealing full skirt (lustrous tulle is a guaranteed win). The pièce de résistance? A refined jewel-tone faux-fur collar.

SIMPLY VERA WANG EARRINGS
TO BUY: $18, kohls.com.

DB FASHION STUDIO CLUTCH
TO BUY: $29, dressbarn.com.

KRISTIN CAVALLARI PUMPS
TO BUY: $99, lulus.com.

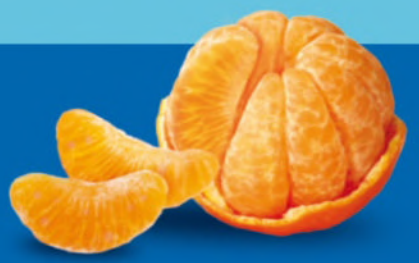
For buying information for the clothing shown here, turn to page 122.

Juicy bits.

Hissy fits.

© 2015 Wonderful Citrus LLC. All Rights Reserved. WONDERFUL, HALOS, PURE GOODNESS, and the accompanying logos and trade dress are trademarks of Wonderful Citrus LLC or its affiliates. WH14077

If you don't have Halos, they don't have Halos.
Sweet, seedless, easy-to-peel Halos are grown in California with pure goodness. Your kids will love them as much as they love you–that is, unless you run out. Wonderful Halos. **Pure Goodness.**



NICE AND EASY

Hosting? A cozy, shimmery sweater paired with polished pants lets you move nimbly while providing a little panache.

JOE FRESH FLATS
TO BUY: $49, joefresh.com.

THE KEY PIECES

1
$60
EXPRESS SCARF
TO BUY: express.com.

2
$65
LULU'S TULLE SKIRT
TO BUY: lulus.com.

3
$50
APT. 9 CARDIGAN
TO BUY: kohls.com.

4
$169
VINCE CAMUTO FEATHER TOP
TO BUY: vince camuto.com.

5
$80
THE LIMITED SWEATER
TO BUY: the limited.com.

6
$65
OASIS TROUSERS
TO BUY: oasis stores.com.

JUST BECAUSE IT SPARKLES doesn't mean it's clean. Go to realsimple.com/beading to find out how to wash embellished pieces.

STILL LIFES BY PHILIP FRIEDMAN; SOFT STYLING BY MAI TRAN

Reach for RELPAX Savings

Talk to your doctor about whether prescription RELPAX® (eletriptan HBr) is right for you.

With the RELPAX $10 Co-pay Card,* you may pay less than you would for a generic prescription.†

*Terms and Conditions apply. Please see below.

PAY NO MORE THAN $10
for your RELPAX® prescription*
This co-pay card is not health insurance.
This co-pay card is accepted only at participating pharmacies.

Download a co-pay card today at RELPAXsavings.com

† According to IMS data from May 2014, the average co-pay for other generic prescriptions on commercial health plans ranges from $16.24–$23.59. Products may not be comparable.

Terms and Conditions

By using the RELPAX $10 Co-pay Card, you acknowledge that you currently meet the eligibility criteria and will comply with the terms and conditions described below:

- Co-pay cards are not valid for prescriptions that are eligible to be reimbursed, in whole or in part, by Medicaid, Medicare, or other federal or state healthcare programs (including any state prescription drug assistance programs and the Government Health Insurance Plan available in Puerto Rico [formerly known as "La Reforma De Salud"]).
- Co-pay cards are not valid for prescriptions that are eligible to be reimbursed by private insurance plans or other health or pharmacy benefit programs that reimburse you for the entire cost of your prescription drugs.
- Patients must be 18 or older.
- By using a co-pay card, a patient may pay only $10 per prescription. Savings provided by each co-pay card are limited to $100 per month. Each co-pay card may be used once per month for twelve (12) months. Provided you continue to meet the eligibility criteria, you may be eligible to receive a second co-pay card during the offering.
- Each patient is limited to one active co-pay card at a time during this offering period and the co-pay cards are not transferable.
- You must deduct the value received under this program from any reimbursement request submitted to your insurance plan, either directly by you or on your behalf.
- The co-pay card cannot be combined with any other rebate or coupon, free trial, or similar offer for the specified prescription.
- **The co-pay card will be accepted only at participating pharmacies.**
- **The co-pay card is not health insurance.**
- This offer is good only in the United States and Puerto Rico.
- Pfizer reserves the right to rescind, revoke, or amend the co-pay card without notice.
- Offer valid from 4/1/11 to 12/31/15. No membership fees apply.

For help with the RELPAX $10 Co-pay Card, call 1-800-926-5334, or write: Pfizer, ATTN: RELPAX, PO Box 2225, Morrisville, PA 19067-8025. www.pfizer.com

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

RELPAX® (eletriptan HBr)

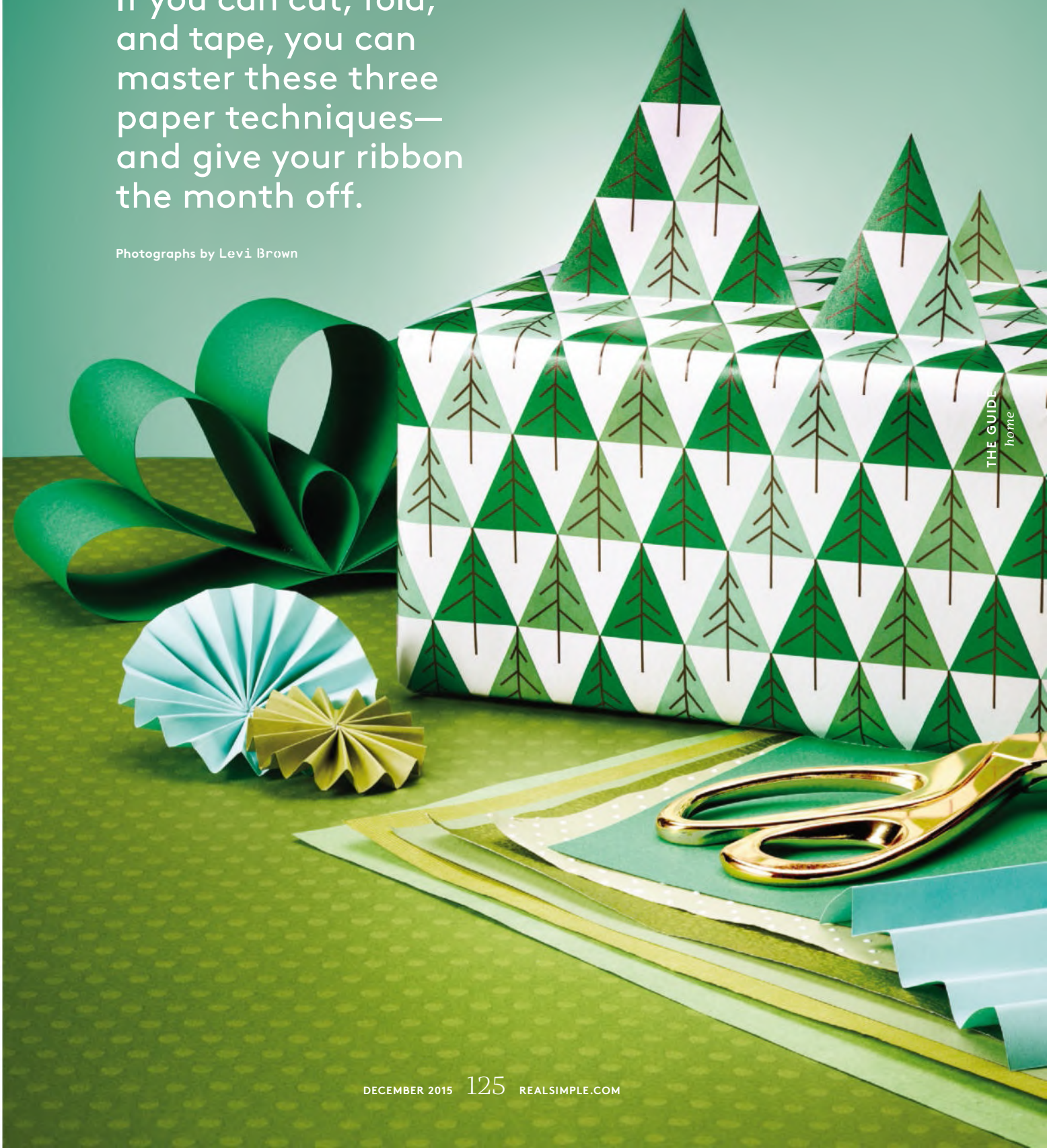
Pfizer RSE687508-02 © 2014 Pfizer Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in USA/December 2014

glade®
WINTER COLLECTION
LIMITED EDITION
FEEL JOY.
FEEL GLADE.®
ONLY AT
glade
spray
WINTER COLLECTION
SPREAD
CHEER
AMBER & BERGAMOT
Wax Melts
6 WAX MELTS
plugins
candle
EXCLUSIVELY AT TARGET
cartwheel
Target savings, mobile style.
Google play
App Store
Download Cartwheel for savings on limited-edition Glade® fragrances.
SC Johnson
A Family Company
©2015 S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. All rights reserved.

WRAP ARTIST(RY)

If you can cut, fold, and tape, you can master these three paper techniques—and give your ribbon the month off.

Photographs by Levi Brown



CRAFT AND PROP STYLING BY MORGAN LEVINE

THE LOOK

PLEATS AND PLAIDS

ADORN ON AN ANGLE For a V shape, fold the right side of a band over the left to form a 45-degree angle. Lay it on the box so the band's crease lines up on the box's edge.

For flat-stacking boxes with origami crispness, channel your inner child. (Remember folding paper fans in health class?) Pleated bands or tightly layered patterns promise big *ooh*s for little effort.

PLEATING HOW-TO

1. Wrap the gift. For a band similar to those shown, cut a piece of complementary paper (featuring one or more colors from the main wrap) at least 8 inches wide. Fold it accordion-style (flipping back and forth), alternating 1-inch folds with ½-inch folds. **2.** Wrap the pleated band around the gift. Secure with double-stick tape.

LAYERED-WRAP HOW-TO

1. Wrap the gift. Next, cover a little less than half the box with a paper in a different pattern that coordinates. You can just eyeball it—no ruler required. The break will look deliberate and styled no matter where it lands, as long as it's not exactly in the middle. **2.** Tuck a tag in the flap.

TO BUY: Lumberjack Plaid; Mid-Century Modern Christmas: each $14 for 12 sheets, normansprintery.com. Holiday Berries; Nutcrackers: each $7 for two sheets, snowandgraham.com. Black wrap; Moss wrap (similar to shown): $6 a roll, papersource.com.

Fall in love with the Tiny Prints

2015 HOLIDAY CARD COLLECTION

Enjoy

25% OFF

USE CODE: TPHOLIDAY25

Send something spectacular®

tinyprints®

TINYPRINTS.COM

Offer expires 12/31/2015 (11:59 P.M. PT). Save 25% off using the code TPHOLIDAY25 at checkout. There is no minimum purchase required for this promotion. Offer is not applicable to previously placed orders, shipping, taxes, rush processing charges, gift certificates and personalized postage stamps. Offer cannot be redeemed more than once per account, household and/or billing address. This particular offer code can only be redeemed once. This promotion code cannot be combined with other offers. Offer is only valid on Tinyprints.com and is not applicable on third party or partner websites. To prevent fraud or abuse, we reserve the right to discontinue or modify this offer or cancel any order.

FRINGE AND FRILLS

FLIP THE WRAP If you're using nice, heavy paper, the reverse side works well as the bow—with a little pattern peeking out.

A nod to the classics: ribbony loops, tinsel-like tassels, and a lit-up tree.

RIBBON HOW-TO

1. Cut a paper strip about three times the box's length. Form a loop at one end, staple or glue the bottom, and repeat to add more loops. **2.** Wrap the rest of the paper around one corner of the box and secure it with double-stick tape. Or trim the unlooped part and tape the bow on top with double-stick tape (see orange-and-blue box).

TASSEL HOW-TO

1. Cut 1-by-3-inch paper strips. **2.** Holding the strip horizontally, fringe each by making cuts close together, reaching almost to the top. **3.** Roll each and secure at the top with glue. **4.** With a fine-tip black marker, draw three arcs on the wrapped gift's surface. Glue on the tassels for a bunting design.

TREE HOW-TO

1. Cut 3 triangles in slightly different sizes. Overlap them to form a tree. Secure with double-sided tape. **2.** Cut 3 small paper strips of equal length. Fold each accordion-style, then fold each in half to yield 3 fans. Glue them to each other to form a circle. **3.** Glue the circle to the tree.

TO BUY: Organic Geometry, $15 for three sheets, normansprintery.com. Glengarry, $10 for three sheets, mrboddington.com. Gold embossed wrap, $7 a roll, papyrusonline.com. Night wrap, $6 a roll, papersource.com.

Bona®

Clean, Shine & Protect

Life happens. Trust Bona® to clean, shine & protect your hardwood floors. With over 90 years of professional experience, we're all you need to keep them looking beautiful.

When life happens in your home, trust **Bona**®.

Also try our Stone, Tile & Laminate cleaning products!

Bona®

Visit **Bona.com** for more retailers nationwide. | Like us on Facebook at Bona Hardwood Floor Care.

THE LOOK

SURPRISE SILHOUETTES

Do a trial run on a scrap of paper to practice cutting out your shapes.
MIND THE GAPS
Before wrapping, tape a square of solid-color paper on the box to prevent it from peeking through the cutout holes.

Bring scenic or figurative paper to life with charming pop-ups—serious wow factor for both kids and adults.

POP-UP HOW-TO

1. Cut a piece of gift wrap and position the box so that the cutouts will land where you want them. (It's helpful to trace the outline of the box in pencil.) **2.** To create pop-ups, you'll need to cut about three-quarters of the way around each shape, leaving the bottom of the form attached. If you're an amateur crafter and it's a basic shape (like the triangle trees on the first page), you can use small scissors. Poke the point through the back of the paper and cut out the forms. If you're a skilled crafter with an intricate design (like the sledder shown here), you'll get more precision with an X-acto knife. (Lay a plastic cutting board on the surface first.) **3.** Wrap the gift. Fold up each shape, pressing hard on the crease so that each stands up.

TO BUY: Penguins, Sledders, and Igloo wraps: each $7 for two sheets, snowandgraham.com.

SEE THE STEP-BY-STEPS
For video demos of some of these techniques, go to realsimple.com/wrapping.

BRIGHT IDEAS

OFFERS
EVENTS
FINDS
GIVEAWAYS

BIG IN NUTRITION, SMALL IN CALORIES

Getting extra protein and nutrition without consuming extra calories can be a challenge. BOOST CALORIE SMART® 100 Calories Nutritional Drink gives you 10 grams of high-quality protein plus 25 vitamins and minerals in a convenient snack-size bottle. Learn more at **boost.com/4oz**.

VASELINE® INTENSIVE CARE™ ADVANCED REPAIR

Prescription-strength moisturization without the prescription. Clinically proven to heal very dry skin in five days. Vaseline believes that healthy skin begins with deep healing moisture—no masking problems or quick fixes. We treat dry skin at the source, and you'll thank us. Learn more at **vaseline.us**.

LOVE. CLICK. BUY.

Shop the Real Simple lifestyle for all things fashion, food, décor, and more. Experience all our favorite brands and products as we partner with Have2HaveIt to create a digital shopping experience curated specially for you. Bring the Real Simple vibrance to your life.

Get clicking to find your favorites at **have2have.it/realsimplelifestylers**.

FIND YOUR HOLIDAY FRAGRANCE

Give even your largest rooms a boost of flameless fragrance with Glade® Wax Melts. Cubes of scented wax melt to release true-to-life fragrance—filling your home with scents you'll love. Glade® Wax Melts are available at Target in a wide variety of your favorite Glade® scents, and last up to 96 hours. Find your scent at **glade.com**. #feelglade

DISCOVER THE NEXT NEW LIFESTYLE

Meet the RS Marketing Team—we're just like you. Always on the lookout for the latest trends, fitness crazes, perfect gift ideas, hostess tips, and cupcake flavors. We will also show you which blogs to obsess over with our A-List Blogger Network. Find out what we can't stop talking about.

LIFESTYLIST BLOG: Designer interviews, a review of that spin class you've been dying to try, and the perfect weekend cocktail.

BRIGHT IDEAS: Giveaways, ad offers, events...did we mention giveaways?

FACEBOOK: Don't miss our innovative recipes from partnerships, insider coverage, and more.

TWITTER: See what goes on in the RS Marketing offices, and get last-minute updates.

INSTAGRAM: realsimplelifestylers

PINTEREST: RealSimpleLifestylers

Discover us today at **rslifestylers.com**.

FROM THE EDITORS OF *MONEY* MAGAZINE

Where should my kid go to college?

Get the answers with the *MONEY College Planner*™.

The right school. The right price. The best value.

Value-focused rankings	Customizable search of 700+ schools	One-on-one expert advice	Financial tools

For $24.95 a year, the *MONEY College Planner*™ will help you find the schools that your child will love and your finances can handle. Stress averted.

Visit money.com/collegeplanning to learn more.

Powered by UNIGO Go. Find. You.

have to gift it

The perfect gift is personable, unexpected, and just a little bit decadent. Get the inside scoop on holiday gifting from a few fave bloggers who know their stuff—then shop their top picks online with our friends at **Have2HaveIt**.

SALLY & MOLLY MILLER

Sally and Molly of **apieceoftoastblog.com** are sisters who share an obsession with all things lovely and stylish. A Piece of Toast shines a spotlight on how beauty is in the details, just like a kindly wrapped gift given to a friend.

1

MINTED HEART SNAPSHOT MIX™ WALL ART
For the new mom or your old college roommate, this modern take on a photo collage is a sweet and simple way to celebrate memories with a personalized foil-pressed print.

2

PIER I IMPORTS MOSCOW MULE MUG SET
For your favorite hostess, pick up a set of four handcrafted copper plated mugs ideal for impromptu entertaining at home.

3

LINDT LINDOR CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES
You can't go wrong with chocolate, so choose the best. Smooth-melting truffles are made to be paired with winter favorites like hot cocoa, your favorite magazine, or a roaring fire.

4

DIPTYQUE FIGUIER VERTE CANDLE
The warm aroma of fig and the freshness of foliage that emanate from this gorgeous candle is the perfect gift for someone who deserves a luxurious treat.

5

TRUFFLE CLARITY CLUTCH
For your most fashion-forward friend, pick up this leather and transparent clutch that's sleek and polished, with a bit of an edge.

6

MINOR OBSESSIONS DIAMOND FLAG STUDS
Chic minimalism can be stunning in an accessory, and these little studs are no joke. With 10K gold and white diamonds, this gift is sure to turn some heads.

Shop these hand-picked items and more at **HAVE2HAVE.IT/REALSIMPLELIFESTYLERS.**

a List BLOGGER NETWORK REAL SIMPLE

The vets will see you now

LET THE FUR FLY! ANSWERS TO YOUR HAIRIEST PET QUESTIONS.

Q.
branching out

Any tips to keep my cat from climbing up the Christmas tree? I'm afraid she'll knock it down.
E.G., via Facebook

A. With its twinkly lights and colorful ornaments, "a Christmas tree is a cat magnet," says veterinarian Ann Hohenhaus. Make yours less enticing by surrounding the base with (unlit) citrus candles. Cats don't like the scent, so they'll avoid it, says Vogelsang. No luck? Consider an automated device that can help you set boundaries: Try the Ssscat Cat Spray Control System ($37, petsafe.net). "It detects motion, so you leave it within three feet of the tree, and when your cat gets near, it gives off a startling, but harmless, blast of air," says Vogelsang. (Aim the sensor at the tree's base so it isn't activated every time you pass by.) Generally, after a few encounters, a cat will steer clear. As a protective measure, skip the fragile ornaments, at least near the bottom of the tree, says Hohenhaus. And avoid using tinsel. "If consumed," she says, "it can bunch up in the cat's intestines and make him ill."

Q.
the daily grind

Can you suggest some healthy and long-lasting chew toys for my dog?
J.I., via Facebook

A. Some vets consider rawhide bones the holy grail of chew toys because dogs will typically gnaw on them for an hour or so—and those that are coated with chlorhexidine help remove plaque buildup, says veterinarian Marty Becker. (His favorite: Virbac's C.E.T. HEXtra Premium Chews, from $56 for 30, amazon.com, also at veterinarian offices.) A dishwasher-safe rubber toy called the Bionic Bone ($10, bionicplay.com) is another smart pick, says veterinarian Jessica Vogelsang. "It's sturdy enough for aggressive chewers but soft enough that it won't damage teeth," she says. Industry pros also recommend the Kong Classic (from $7, petsmart.com), a rubber treat-stuffer toy. "I freeze it with peanut butter and a small rawhide stick inside, like a Popsicle," says Becker. "It keeps dogs chewing for hours."

Q.
weighty issue

I have two cats—one that's overweight and another that's fit. How do I put only the heavy one on a diet?
B.R., via Facebook

A. If you're leaving bowls of food out all day, put an end to that all-kitty-can-eat buffet. Cats are scavengers by nature, so if allowed to free-feed, they're likely to gorge, says Becker. Instead, divide their daily intake into morning and evening mealtimes of 15 to 30 minutes each. When the time is up, take the bowls away. "Typically, after a week or two, they'll adapt to the structured feedings," says animal-behavior expert Steven Appelbaum. To make sure you're serving the right portions, ask your vet how many calories the tubbier tabby should consume daily, and get a recommendation for a healthy formula. (Becker's pick: Hill's Prescription Diet Metabolic Feline, $23 for a four-pound bag, hillspet.com.) Have trouble keeping the cats out of each other's bowls? Put both on the diet plan, but once a day give the normal-weight one an extra serving in a room by herself, says Vogelsang.

THE PET EXPERTS

STEVEN APPELBAUM, president of the Animal Behavior College, Santa Clarita, California.

MARTY BECKER, D.V.M., North Idaho Animal Hospital, Sandpoint, Idaho.

ANN HOHENHAUS, D.V.M., Animal Medical Center, New York City.

JESSICA VOGELSANG, D.V.M., author of *All Dogs Go to Kevin.*

Written by
Sarah Grossbart

Photograph by
Constance Bannister Corp

GETTY IMAGES

Eukanuba®
DEDICATED TO
HEALTHIER
LONGER
LIVES™
Eukanuba®
Meet Iowa, at age 17, our relentless fetcher
› Living an exceptionally long life full of vitality
®/™ Trademarks ©The Iams Company 2015
Eukanuba
ADULT
Eukanuba® Dedicated to Healthier, Longer Lives™
Available at your local pet store
Learn about the Long Life Study at Eukanuba.com

Ask the Organizer

holiday hordes

At Christmastime, my house gets crowded with overnight guests and becomes a big mess. How do I maintain order?

G. B., VIA FACEBOOK

The trick is to be assertive about where guests' things should go, but with a welcoming tone. You can say, "We're happy you're here! Let me help you settle in. Here are some drawers and hangers for your stuff. Is there anything else you need?" A portable clothes rack is helpful if visitors are staying in a shared space, like a home office. To head off other clutter, set out containers where odds and ends naturally collect: a basket in the bathroom for toiletries; a tray on the dresser for a wallet and keys.

all the trimmings

This year, I want to create a more organized storage plan for ornaments, tree lights, and other decorations. What are your best pack-up tips?

W. R., VIA FACEBOOK

I advise clients to keep their decorations in clear tubs so they can see the contents (Clear 74-Quart Watertight Tote, $21, containerstore.com). Pack them in like lasagna: Cushion the bottom with tissue paper, then add the heaviest decorations in one layer. Alternate layers of decorations and layers of tissue paper to prevent scratches and breaking. Label each bin with one term that describes what's inside, like ORNAMENTS or LIGHTS, instead of listing the whole inventory. (The more work a project takes, the less likely you are to follow through.) Store the tubs in a finished basement, an insulated attic, or some other climate-controlled space.

Illustration by The Ellaphant in the Room

GOT A QUESTION? Submit it at realsimple.com/organizing.

season's greetings

I love holiday cards, but they clutter up my refrigerator. Any better ideas for displaying them neatly? And how long do I keep them?

H. S., VIA FACEBOOK

When you give the cards pride of place on a small spot, like a refrigerator or a console, they can take over. Mixing them in with other mementos there makes it even harder to part with them later, since then they're part of a whole vignette. I prefer a separate setup that treats the cards like temporary holiday decor, lasting only as long as you keep the tree, or until just after New Year's. Use them to create a suspended display: Straddle them on a ribbon forming a garland over a doorway, or clip them to strings in rows across a bookshelf or a mantel. That way, the cards are in easy view and your surfaces stay clear. (For another display idea, see page 174.)

NEW YORK CITY–BASED ORGANIZER ANDREW MELLEN TACKLES YOUR TRICKIEST CLUTTER TROUBLE SPOTS.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

Southern Living & Operation Finally Home

BUILDING HOPE

Proudly Presented by JCPenney

5 American Cities Veterans Custom-Built Homes Changed Lives

U.S. Army Sergeant First Class (E-7) Joseph James, wife Jarin, and daughters (from left: Melanie, Sadie, and Rachel) at their new home dedication in Hendersonville, Tennessee on Friday, September 18, 2015.

Southern Living has teamed up with Operation FINALLY HOME to bring you BUILDING HOPE, a touching and inspiring new video series.

Watch BUILDING HOPE at SouthernLiving.com/BuildingHope

ALL TRADEMARKS ARE THE PROPERTIES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS. © 2015 TIME INC. LIFESTYLE GROUP

Your teen would like to have a

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

as much as you would like to play their

ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

video game

You don't have to get them to get what they want to eat.

The New Walking Taco from Lunchables Uploaded.
An afternoon snack you Mix, Heat and Eat.

MIX HEAT EAT

© 2015 KRAFT Foods

"Help! I'm spending the holidays with my family"

With the stress of traveling, gift buying, and navigating in-laws (not to mention the tyranny of that dang Elf on the Shelf), the Polar Express of family harmony is heading off the rails. Want more peace on earth—or in your mom's living room? Take this advice on navigating seven sticky situations.

1

Your siblings let their kids run wild (late nights, *coook-ieeees!*). You don't want to be a Grinch, but your kids do better sticking with their routines—and bedtime.

"This is hard, because it's such a triumph to figure out what magical routines work best for your kid in the first place," says Hillary Frank, the creator and host of the parenting podcast The Longest Shortest Time. "But there are a few times a year when it's worth disrupting that for the chance to have a memorable experience with family or friends." To gauge just how far to push the envelope (they want to plow through how many movie versions of *A Christmas Carol* tonight?), do periodic check-ins, says Frank. Is your kid having enough fun to justify tomorrow's payback? Then let the good times roll. (And be sure to check your motivation: Don't be a killjoy just because you want to swill Champagne with the grown-ups in peace.) If she's too tired to even enjoy the late-night TV, call bedtime. "You know what's best for your kids," says Deborah Gilboa, a family physician and the author of *Get the Behavior You Want... Without Being the Parent You Hate!* Don't put them behind the eight ball because you're unwilling to say that you have different rules or simply want to avoid a debate, she says.

Written by Ingela Ratledge
Illustrations by Brian Rea

2

Your sister (and, um, Santa) go overboard on presents. Your philosophy is "Less is more." You don't want to disappoint your kids, but you don't want to compromise your values, either.

"Pitch a different approach, like a three-gifts-per-kid limit during communal present-opening," says Susan Raines, Ph.D., a professor of conflict management at Kennesaw State University, in Georgia. If your sister balks at that idea, ask that the bulk of the gifts come from actual people, not Santa. It won't nix the awkwardness, but at least your children won't be worrying that they somehow landed on the naughty list. The next step is to create a diversion while the cousins are working through an Everest-size mountain of gifts from Mom and Dad. Tell your crew that you'll take them sledding as soon as they've finished unwrapping. Or make sure that the last gift they open is the most-wanted video game or a remote-control car that will receive rapt attention for hours. What if it's already too late, and you've found yourself in the midst of an American Girl ambush? Find a reason to change rooms (*Let's eat the gumdrops off the gingerbread house!)* and talk. "Listen to them vent about what they saw. Ask how they felt watching their cousins open their gifts and opening their own," says Frank. "There are no right answers." This talk can introduce the important idea that there will always be someone who has more than they do.

3

You can't properly argue with your husband when there are 18 people in the house!

Mistletoe not doing the trick, huh? You're not alone. "The madness of the holidays makes everyday irritations with your spouse even harder to deal with," says Winifred M. Reilly, a marriage and family therapist in Berkeley, California. Tensions are probably running higher than usual, so try to let go of the little things, like where he tossed his socks. For the beefs that need to be dealt with, try what Reilly calls speed-fighting. "It's good when you're short on time and privacy," she says. "Give yourself five minutes—2½ for each of you—to discuss what's upsetting. No cross-talk allowed— just listen to the other without interruption or rebuttal." Then go back to whatever was happening. You missed only one hand of Uno, and you can each let the other's thoughts percolate a bit. If you need to revisit the issue later, you can, but the speed round releases the pressure, reducing the possibility of a public blow-up.

FAMILY DYNAMICS
Learn how to handle 15 classic personalities and avoid holiday skirmishes at realsimple.com/familyfights.

4

You want to stay put this year and not schlep your family across the country. Your parents will be crushed.

"There are no magic words that will keep you from upsetting them," says Terence Patterson, a family psychologist in San Francisco. Even if you explain why you want to start your own traditions or if the thought of a plane ride with three kids is giving you hives, "you're still saying no," says Frank. "I don't think the actual reason or how honest you are about it really matters." So this conversation is about softening the blow. (Doubly so if you've decided to skip the rigmarole in favor of the Bahamas.) Deliver the news with the sandwich technique, says Judith Orloff, M.D., an assistant professor of psychiatry at UCLA and the author of *Emotional Freedom:* "Something positive on either end, with the difficult part in the middle," she says. The key is to finish on an optimistic note that sets up an alternative, like "We're planning a trip over President's Day weekend, when it's not so chaotic and we can have you all to ourselves." And if the news still goes over like a lead balloon? Give it time. "Many people do come around eventually," says Patterson. Also, learning to set boundaries or say no to your parents—even when it feels impossible—is part of being an adult, says Orloff. "Too often we keep doing things to be people pleasers," she says, "and although I understand the tendency to do that with our parents, it can be toxic."

5

Your college-age daughter only wants to see her friends while she's home. *Sob.*

If you're revving up for mother-daughter strolls and marathon talks and Abby is halfway to the Cheesecake Factory to reunite with her high school buds, don't be

rock *your* runway!

Make Your Everyday
Fabulous with InStyle

PICK IT UP IN PRINT OR DIGITAL!

InStyle

Laura Schroff,

#1 bestselling author of *An Invisible Thread*, brings you the true extraordinary children's story of how one woman's decision to help a boy on the street changed both of their lives forever.

A true story based on the #1 New York Times bestseller
AN INVISIBLE THREAD CHRISTMAS STORY
by Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski
illustrated by Barry Root

The Perfect Holiday Storybook!

Hardcover:
9781481419307 | $17.99
Ebook:
9781481419314 | $10.99

Also Available!

"This is a book capable of restoring our faith in each other and in the very idea that maybe everything is going to be okay after all."

—Catherine Ryan Hyde, author of *Pay It Forward* and *Jumpstart the World*, on *An Invisible Thread*

Pick up or download wherever books and ebooks are sold!

Little Simon

An imprint of Simon & Schuster's Children's Publishing Division

SimonandSchuster.com/Kids
AnInvisibleThread.com

shocked. It *feels* personal, but it couldn't be more normal and natural—she's used to making her own schedule. To stave off disappointment (yours) and resentment (hers), discuss expectations. "It's not realistic to have her do everything she did when she was nine. What you want is time with her, so plan that," says Patterson. Let her know which family functions are nonnegotiable—no, it can't be all of them—and let her bring a friend if possible. To book one-on-one time? Think in terms of her wheelhouse (say, shopping for a New Year's Eve outfit), not yours (forget that hike).

6

Your in-laws come for a week every year, but it's too much for you. How do you shave it down to four days?

Well, you can't be 100 percent honest, unfortunately. (*I can stand your passive aggressiveness for only so long!)* But you can give some version of the truth, says Gilboa, such as "'We're so excited you're coming to visit. Could you pick the best four days in there? We've promised ourselves some downtime with the kids during the break.'" Bonnie Harris, the director of ConnectiveParenting.com and the author of *When Your Kids Push Your Buttons,* offers this tack: "With the term paper/swim meet/night terrors we've been dealing with, we want to keep things fairly regular. We'd love to have you stay for a few days, and then we can book a room for you nearby." Be brief—the more colorful your story, the less valid it sounds. "People overexplain, and that makes it worse," says Patterson.

7

You aren't as religious as your family and want to opt out of certain traditions.

Pick your battles, says Patterson. Why not coast quietly through a premeal prayer rather than ruffling cousin Jean's feathers with a Nietzsche quote? "You can be respectful without having to say anything," says Orloff. It gets trickier when a deeper investment is required—a lengthy church service or allowing your newborn to play baby Jesus in the town nativity. "If you can participate to make someone else happy, do. We make sacrifices for people we love," says Orloff. "If you're going to feel tortured, then don't do it." But try to schedule another activity that starts earlier, so you're out of the house, not settling in with Netflix as the churchgoers file out to midnight Mass.

HYUNDAI Tucson

Optional features shown. Panoramic sunroof is optional on the Limited trim. Hyundai is a registered trademark of Hyundai Motor Company. All rights reserved. ©2015 Hyundai Motor America.

The bold design and panoramic sunroof of the all-new Tucson are designed with one feat in mind: to bust you out of your comfort zone and into the realm of new experiences. With spacious seating and cargo area, this SUV has plenty of room to handle even the biggest bucket lists.

QUESTION EVERYTHING

Is being *fair* really that important?

Stop worrying about each kid getting the same size cookie or an identical number of gifts, because the short answer to the question above is NO. Here's what children really mean when they scream, "That's not fair!" and the response from you that helps them build character.

Written by Elizabeth Passarella

1

Kids think fair means equal.

And, frankly, adults often do, too. "OK, OK, you can each have a pink marker." Or *(takes broccoli floret off one plate and shoves it into own mouth):* "There, now you have the same amount." Through these actions, parents teach their children that fair means equal and also that equal—whether that's a number of toys or minutes on the iPad—is always right. "That is the root of the problem. We train our children to expect that," says Betsy Brown Braun, a child development and behavior specialist and the author of *You're Not the Boss of Me.* "When a child screams, 'That's not fair!' she really means, 'I want whatever he has. I'm not happy with what just happened. I got the lollipop with the hair on it.'" The result is that parents work overboard to even things out because it's hard (and annoying) to see a child unhappy.

2

What it should mean is "just."

"When we say 'just,' we mean that we're considering all sides of the issue, all variables and people," says Braun. "Fairness is really about giving your child what is needed at the time." It might be extremely practical (one kid needs new shoes because his feet have grown a half size since September) or emotional (kid has rough day, so Mom takes him out to dinner for some one-on-one time). When the other sibling inevitably balks—*I want to go to Chick-fil-A with Mom, too*—many parents' first instinct is to say, "All right, I'll take you tomorrow night." Don't do that, says Braun: "It undermines the consideration. It lets him know that he'll get the same thing, and that's not life." Instead, the goal should be to teach a child that what doesn't seem fair (in his eyes) is still right and just—because attention (and, OK, sometimes waffle fries) are solving a necessary problem or healing a hurt. "We want our kids to get along with people, and to do that you have to appreciate someone's perspective, to develop a sense of empathy," says Gail Heyman, a professor of psychology at the University of California, San Diego.

OFF THE HOOK
More parenting rules you can stop stressing about (forever!) at realsimple.com/parentingadvice.

THE BOLDER THE SUV, THE BIGGER THE BUCKET

Optional features shown. Hyundai is a registered trademark of Hyundai Motor Company.
All rights reserved. ©2015 Hyundai Motor America.

HYUNDAI Tucson

PHOTOGRAPH BY LILIAN PEREZ/CORBIS

3

Don't say, "Life's not fair."

Oh, it's tempting. Especially for the little injustices that loom large only for a six-year-old (size and shape of Play-Doh allotment, length of time on parental shoulders). "That phrase means absolutely nothing to a child," says Braun. The better response: "I think you're saying that you don't like it. You're unhappy." For the little things, follow that up with "Yep, I'm not always going to scoop ice cream the exact same way every time." Or (when it comes to stuff): "You'd like a new pair of shoes—I get it. And when your feet grow, you'll get them." Don't overexplain. "When you bend over backwards with answers, you run the risk of a child thinking, I'm getting the attention I want," says Braun. But don't brush it off, either. "If one kid gets something more, even if there's a great reason, but you don't talk about it, this creates hidden resentment," says Heyman. Sometimes your kids will be spot on—a situation is truly unjust. "Maybe a child comes home and says, 'The teacher punished the whole class for something that one kid did. That's not fair.' That's the opportunity for a good discussion, acknowledging that it can be tricky," says Heyman. "Maybe they wouldn't have handled it that way, but they can try to see the teacher's perspective."

4

Good news! You're building resilience.

In addition to developing empathy, children are learning to tolerate disappointment. "There are going to be all kinds of things that happen in a kid's life that don't seem fair. But we rob them of the opportunity to learn resilience when we make everything equal and fine," says Braun. (For older kids, this also robs them of basic math skills: Your child is ticked off because he got one present and his sister got three? Explain how her three smaller things add up to his new bike.) When your child gets a raw deal, sympathize and move on. Be genuine. "Yeah, that's lousy. I understand why you're upset about this." Then share your own disappointments—the promotion that you didn't get, the friend who let you down. Says Braun: "We need to model how to respond to those concepts that we want them to learn."

LIST.

MAKE SPIRITS BRIGHTER

very merry cards and instant-preview stamps

EXPRESSIONERY

INK AND PAPER GOODS

VISIT EXPRESSIONERY.COM

Use code **GIFTS30** for 30% off custom stamps*

*Valid through 12/31/2015. Products Featured: Joyful Burst Stamp, Merry Twinkle Stamp, Harvest Wreath Stamp, Winter Merry Holiday Photo Cards, and Happiest Holidays Stamp. Receive 30% off custom stamps when you enter code 'GIFTS30' in the offer code box. Offer excludes all embossers & stamp ink refills. This offer cannot be combined with any other promotion, sale or discount. Shipping fees and sales tax are separate. Prices, specifications and availability are subject to change without notice. Expressionery.com reserves the right to limit quantities or refuse orders.

Work & Money

THE VIEW FROM HERE

NINA JACOBSON
- Film and TV producer, founder of Color Force
- Los Angeles

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER PATEY/CONTRIBUTOR VIA GETTY IMAGES

Nina Jacobson was at the hospital with her partner, who was in labor with their third child, when she got the shocking news that she was being fired from her job as president of the Walt Disney Motion Picture Group. Jacobson went on to start her own production company, Color Force—the studio behind *The Hunger Games*. Walking briskly through a back lot, Jacobson, 50, spoke with *Real Simple* about career bumps (this was her third firing) and what she's learned about balance (or lack thereof) by being her own boss.

You were outspoken when you were fired.
The protocol in Hollywood is you don't actually say you were fired. Everybody knows it, but you pretend you made this choice. And I didn't want to do that. I *didn't* make this choice. I loved the job, and I was in the thick of it and doing well at it. So I decided to tell the truth, because I was sad that it was over.

How did you cope?
I learned to be grateful for never having mistaken my job for my life. Your family, your kids, your parents—those are the things that matter.

How did you get started in this field?
I went to Brown [University]. I loved doing theater and took some film classes. I always liked going to the movies. It all added up to an idea that I wanted to make films. I got an internship as a researcher for a documentary filmmaker, which led to a full-time job. Then I was able to get a script-reading job at Disney.

You've been an executive at Disney, Universal, and Dreamworks. Color Force is only seven people. Was that on purpose?
If you have a lot of people working for you, they're going to want and need to express themselves. I didn't want to be frustrating a bunch of people who never get to do the

Written by
Jane Porter

things they want to do because I'm too picky. It's better for us to be a small group who put a lot of time into a few things than a big group who put a little bit of time into a lot.

What's it like to be in a meeting with you?
People in my company are very close-knit. We have a lot of fun together. I'm also very direct. I think people really appreciate a straight answer. Sometimes you'll sit in a meeting and people are so busy trying to be nice and respectful that you can't understand what they're saying. If you're so busy worrying about hurting my feelings that I don't know what needs to be done, that's not helpful.

What most excites you about your work?
Finding an author I respect and admire, figuring out a way to bring those books to the screen, and having the public embrace them. *The Hunger Games* has been the experience of a lifetime.

You've talked about having good partnerships in business.
One of the best decisions I've ever made is to partner on things. I would much rather not keep all the money for myself if it means I have more of a life. It's absolutely a trade worth making. I partnered with producer Jon Kilik on *The Hunger Games* and with Brad Simpson in running my company so that we can tag-team. It allows you to say, "I've got to go," and walk away.

"One of the best decisions I've ever made is to partner on projects. I would much rather not keep all the money for myself if it means I have more of a life."

Your job looks glamorous. What are some of the hard parts?
Having to travel and be away from my family. Now I'm [home] in L.A., which seems great, but the hours are brutal. When we're in production, we're working 14-hour days.

Your kids are 17, 15, and 9 now. What are your feelings on work-life balance?
It's never a balance. Wherever you are, you always feel like you probably should be at the other place. My partner, Jen, is a Stanford graduate and smart as can be. She could be doing any number of things, but very luckily for me and my kids, she has opted to be an at-home parent.

You come from a close family, right?
My mother, my brother, and his family live five minutes from me. I grew up five minutes from where I live now. My grandparents on both sides lived five minutes from us. We're a tight clan.

Is it true you bring your dogs to work?
I wanted to be a vet as a kid. When I started looking at office space, one absolute criterion was that I would be able to bring my dog. Now I have two—an Australian shepherd and her nephew.

What type of leader are you?
I don't believe in mandating things. The better idea should prevail, as opposed to the one that came from the person who happens to have more power.

Parting advice to others who work in a tough industry?
Oftentimes you get knocked down, and that's when you pick yourself up and the greater success occurs.

ASK BUCKY

TIME INC.'S* ALL-KNOWING, STRAIGHT-SHOOTING VICE PRESIDENT OF STAFFING, BUCKY KEADY, TACKLES YOUR WORKPLACE CONUNDRUMS.

"Are there specific strategies for doing well in a FaceTime or phone interview?"
Any meeting you take, whether it's by phone, FaceTime, or another medium, should be handled like an in-person meeting. For a video situation, dress as if you're going to an interview. Use a chair that allows you to sit upright. Don't eat or drink. Act as if you're sitting across the desk from the person you're talking to. And think about what's going on in the background—don't let us see the kitchen cabinets or the bathroom door open. For a phone interview, I can't tell you how disruptive and unprofessional it is to have someone call from a cell. I know this is a tall order these days, but find a landline. You sound better, you come off as much more professional, and you'll be sitting still, which will help you concentrate. With these sorts of interviews, your listening skills have to be very good, especially if there's a slight delay. Don't be quite so intent on getting your message across. Take in what the other person is saying, wait a beat, then respond.

*TIME INC. IS THE PARENT COMPANY OF *REAL SIMPLE*.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

Trademarks owned by Société des Produits Nestlé S.A., Vevey, Switzerland

VETERINARIAN RECOMMENDED

ONE Food.

Whole Body Health For Life.

ALL THE NUTRITION YOUR CAT NEEDS. AND NOTHING THEY DON'T.

There's a Purina ONE® formula to help support your cat's whole body health today and every day of their life. Expertly developed with real meat, poultry or fish and 100% nutrition for each life stage, Purina ONE provides all the nutrition your cat needs for a lifetime.

facebook.com/purinaonecats

PurinaONE.com/WholeBodyHealthCat

5 ways to make the most of credit-card rewards

With this season's flurry of purchasing—and the pileup of points on your cards—knowing how to work those rewards programs can make a difference. But who has the time to wade through the details? *Real Simple* asked Matt Schulz, a senior industry analyst at CreditCards.com, a marketplace and resource center, to short-list the best strategies.

1

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT.

Some credit cards offer generous rewards for specific spending categories—groceries, gas, movies, home repair—so using certain cards for certain purchases makes sense. A free app called Smorecard will do the thinking for you. Download it, then indicate which cards you carry. (It won't ask for card numbers, just names.) It uses a GPS to find you the best return based on your location. If, for example, you're at the supermarket, it will show you which of your cards has a grocery cash-back program in play.

2

GET GIFT CARDS INSTEAD OF MERCH.

Some retailers, like Amazon, sync with your credit card to allow you to pay for purchases with points. But first check the point-to-dollar ratio; it's not always favorable. If a $50 item costs 6,500 points, you're better off redeeming rewards for a $50 gift card to the retailer—for probably just 5,000 points. While each card has its own dollar-to-point formula, you'll probably get about $1 on a gift card for 100 points collected.

3

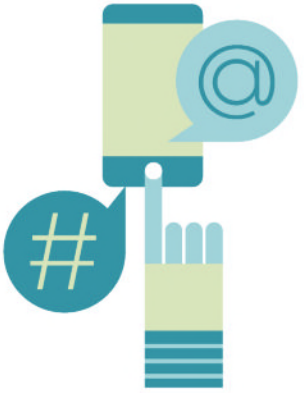
WORK YOUR WAY UP.

The most, er, *rewarding* rewards cards go to people with great credit. You might be tempted to apply for one of these even if you're unlikely to be approved. What's the harm, right? Well, if your credit isn't top-notch, there *is* harm. Application rejections temporarily ding your credit score and thus put you further back in line. To see which cards pair well with your score, go to Score Match on FinanceGlobe.com, a free financial-advice service.

4

USE POINTS TO PAY DOWN YOUR BALANCE.

Yes, trading in points for a $100 gift card is cash in your pocket, but it doesn't make sense to put cash there when you owe it to the card company—typically at an interest rate of 15 percent. If you're living with credit-card debt month to month, check the rewards page to see if your card lets you use points toward the balance.



5

FRIEND YOUR CARD COMPANY.

Your credit card probably has a social presence—find it. (The best way is to go through the company's official site, so you know that you're following a valid account.) Not only will you be privy to tips on special perks—say, off-menu treats at a restaurant when you show a participating card—but you might also be handed extra points for participating in surveys.

Written by
Yelena Moroz

Illustrations by
Eight Hour Day

WANT MORE MONEY?

JOIN THE CLUB.

At TIAA-CREF we use personalized advice to help clients reach their long-term financial goals. In a recent survey of 28 companies, TIAA-CREF participants had the highest average retirement account balances.[1] Our advice, along with our award-winning performance,[2] can improve your financial health. Just what you'd expect from a company that's created to serve and built to perform.

Learn how our financial advice can pay off for you at TIAA.org/JoinUs

TIAA CREF

BUILT TO PERFORM.

CREATED TO SERVE.

BEST OVERALL LARGE FUND COMPANY[2]

The Lipper Awards are based on a review of 36 companies' 2012 and 48 companies' 2013 and 2014 risk-adjusted performance.

[1]Source: LIMRA Secure Retirement Institute, Not-for-Profit Market Survey, first-quarter 2015 results. Average assets per participant based on full-service business. Please note average retirement account balances are not a measure of performance of TIAA-CREF retirement offerings. [2]The Lipper Award is given to the group with the lowest average decile ranking of three years' Consistent Return for eligible funds over the three-year period ended 11/30/12, 11/30/13, and 11/30/14 respectively. TIAA-CREF was ranked among 36 fund companies in 2012 and 48 fund companies in 2013 and 2014 with at least five equity, five bond, or three mixed-asset portfolios. Past performance does not guarantee future results. For current performance and rankings, please visit the Research and Performance section on tiaa-cref.org. TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC, Teachers Personal Investors Services, Inc., and Nuveen Securities, LLC, members FINRA and SIPC, distribute securities products. ©2015 Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America–College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF), 730 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017. C24849D

Consider investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses carefully before investing. Go to tiaa-cref.org for product and fund prospectuses that contain this and other information. Read carefully before investing. TIAA-CREF funds are subject to market and other risk factors.

ADVERTISEMENT

presenting TRAVEL+LEISURE

journeys™

// WE PLAN, YOU PACK. //

ISLAND HOPPING BY YACHT IN

croatia

CULTURAL IMMERSION IN

cuba

20

unique itineraries + experiences expertly curated by **T+L editors**, and **Black Tomato**, the award-winning luxury travel company.

AN ADVENTURE TOUR THROUGH

iceland

DESERT CAMPING IN

oman

[AND MORE]

BOOK TODAY

FOR TRIP DETAILS AND TO BOOK, GO TO **TRAVELANDLEISURE.COM/JOURNEYS** OR CALL **844.284.0205**.

How to do a week's worth of work in three days

Expert advice on efficient office hours—so you can power down, scoot home, and enjoy the holidays.

Don't wait until Monday morning to start thinking about your work schedule, says Julie Morgenstern, a time-management expert and the author of *Never Check E-mail in the Morning.* Begin two weeks before. Identify exactly what you'll be able to achieve during holiday weeks and when you'll tackle each task. Book the early part of the week, when more colleagues are around, with meetings and calls. Leave the (often quiet) last day before the break for solo work, like expense reports. Jot down potential roadblocks so you'll be prepped to maneuver around them.

Banish interruptions by coworkers who pop in to chat (or even people who need you for legit reasons). Morgenstern suggests this exit line: "I want to give you my undivided attention but can't give you that now." Then offer a time and date to meet—in the future. Also effective, says Shari McGuire, a time-management expert and the author of *Take Back Your Time:* standing up at your desk, which tacitly "communicates urgency to wrap things up." But don't skip lunch or breaks, says Morgenstern: "You'll end up working harder and longer but not as effectively."

Schedule e-mail–checking blocks—two 45-minute chunks per day—to batch-process messages. The constant checking of e-mail and social media "is the number one enemy of productivity," says Morgenstern. This is not news to us, but oh, what a tough habit to break. Use a short holiday week as a test run of this new system. Nail it and you'll be set for next month—and the Greatest Career New Year's Resolution ever.

Written by
Brandi Broxson

Illustration by
Eight Hour Day

PROMOTION

REAL SIMPLE 1-800 flowers.com

EXCLUSIVELY AT 1800FLOWERS.COM/REALSIMPLE

TIS *the* SEASON

Spread holiday joy with bouquets as vibrant as the season itself.
Exclusively from Real Simple and 1-800-Flowers.com.

1800FLOWERS.COM/REALSIMPLE

15% OFF

WITH CODE SIMPLE15

ENDS 12/31/15
**While supplies last.*

This is real

12.2015

LAURA DART (HARBORSIDE, MAINE, AUGUST 2014)

Hey, SUGARPLUM

SPREAD GOOD CHEER IN STYLE WITH LUSTROUS TEXTURES AND SPARKLING TOUCHES.

MATCH POINT

With its rich garnet silk and chunky, glittering neckline, this sleeveless top has enough spirit all on its own. For extra embellishment, blend a similar-colored purple on the top and bottom lids. Go with something sheer so the effect is elegant (not edgy).

TOP: Reiss top, $220, reiss.com.
EYE SHADOW: Chanel Illusion D'Ombre Long Wear Luminous Eyeshadow in Rouge Noir, $36, chanel.com.

CREATIVE LICENSE

The prettiest example of holiday excess: Pair a boldly printed dress with lips and nails in a shade that commands equal attention. Try mixing textures—velvety matte lips plus glossy nails—for even more drama. DIY nail tip: Use a tapered pen cap to dot on gold polish for a fun accent.

DRESS: Cynthia Rowley floral flare dress, $798, nydress.com.
CLUTCH: Lulu's gold rhinestone clutch, $39, lulus.com.
RINGS: Elizabeth and James Pearce twist ring (part of a set), $135 for set, anthropologie.com.
LIPSTICK: By Terry Terrybly Velvet Rouge in My Red, $47, b-glowing.com.
NAIL POLISH: Nails Inc One Coat Gel in Duchess Street, $11, nailsinc.com.

Fashion Editor
Victoria Sanchez-Lincoln

Written by
Rebecca Daly and Heather Muir

Photographs by
Barbara Donninelli

WINTER LIGHT

Dust rose gold highlighter along your cheekbones for a lit-from-within glow. Play up the effect by wearing soft, ethereal nudes and an icy gilded necklace.

HIGHLIGHTER: e.l.f. Studio Baked Highlighter in Blush Gems, $3, eyeslipsface.com.
COAT: Oasis faux-fur coat, $155, oasis-stores.com.
NECKLACE: BCBGMAXAZRIA fringe stone necklace, $98, bcbg.com.

PRECIOUS METALS

Investing in a hero piece that will dress up anything you already own (even the simplest of silk shirts) is a cost-efficient way to see the season through in style. This showstopping silver sequined pencil skirt does the trick nicely. Extend the life of a growing-out manicure by swiping metallic polish along the nail base for a festive, foiled effect.

SKIRT: Banana Republic sequin pencil skirt, $158, bananarepublic.com.
BLOUSE: Navoy blouse by Escada, $975, escada.com.
RING: Atelier Swarovski ring, $345, ronrobinson.com.
NAIL POLISH: Essie Nail Polish in Après-Chic, $8.50, essie.com.

SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Details like a heavily embellished clutch and an artful manicure hold their own against a dramatically textured dress. Skip the salon for the nail art: Just layer a mattifying topcoat over any polish, then add some sparkle by swiping a shimmery dark polish along just the tips.

DRESS: Tosia shimmer jacquard dress, $845, tosianyc.com.
CLUTCH: Chico's pearls clutch, $79, chicos.com.
BANGLE: Paige Novick rose-gold open bangle, $300, paigenovick.com.
NAIL POLISH: Revlon Nail Enamel in Seductive, $4, target.com. Caption Polish Matte Top Coat, $12, dermstore.com. Sally Hansen Triple Shine Nail Color in Slick Black, $5 at drugstores.

RICH TAPESTRY

A tight tonal color palette—like the understated pinks and purples here—unites an array of ornamentation, from brocade to bedazzled. A quick hack for chipped nails that you don't have time to redo: Paint a backward V along your tips to disguise any dings. Pair metallic polish with a shiny opaque one for a strong combo.

DRESS: Alice + Olivia by Stacie Bendet dress, $485, for similar styles aliceandolivia.com. **CLUTCH:** Kate Landry glass clutch, $285, dillards.com. **RINGS:** Lydell ring set, $28, lydellnyc.com. **NAIL POLISH:** Lauren B. Beauty in Rosé on Robertson, $18, laurenbbeauty.com. OPI Nail Lacquer in Guys & Galaxies, $9.50, ulta.com.

THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

For those who do not go gently into that good night: Smooth a finely flecked, shimmery body oil over shoulders and décolletage, then top (bam!) with gold powder. Finish with a statement-making necklace and, for contrast, vampy lips.

BODY OIL: Kopari Coconut Body Glow, $36, koparibeauty.com.
GOLD POWDER: Scünci Hair and Body Shimmer, $10, ulta.com.
LIPSTICK: NYX Cosmetics Simply Vamp Lip Cream in Aphrodisiac, $6.50, nyxcosmetics.com.
NECKLACE: Lizzie Fortunato gold-plated necklace, $470, saksfifthavenue.com.

TOP IT ALL OFF with one of the party-worthy updos at realsimple.com/partyhair.

EVER GREEN

Give traditional smoky eyes the night off and sweep on an unexpected (but just as sexy) color, like olive green. It's not as harsh as gray or black, and it's easy to do yourself. Let your outfit play a supporting role with this look—a pleated metallic top adds visual interest but doesn't clash with the striking shadow.

EYE SHADOW: Urban Decay Eyeshadow in Bender, $19, urbandecay.com.
TOP: Zara pleated metallic top, $40, zara.com.

HAIR BY COREY TUTTLE FOR ORIBE HAIR CARE; MAKEUP BY KEIKO HIRAMOTO USING DIORSHOW; MANICURES BY YUKO WADA FOR ATELIER MANAGEMENT AND PAINTBOX USING DIOR VERNIS.

CLEAN, GREEN, SERENE

No matter what you're celebrating—Christmas, Hanukkah, family harmony—these unfussy wintry arrangements, all made in minutes using everyday greenery, will bring joy to your world.

BRANCH OUT

Who says vases need flowers? One sweeping spray of boxwood (tall) and a sprig of seeded eucalyptus (small) among a cluster of shapely vessels creates a festive moment on a mantel or in an entry. Stick with neutral-colored containers, and casually concentrate greens in the center. (For similar vessels: Frosted Glass Collection vases, from $30 each, terrain.com.)

Written by Betsy Goldberg
Photographs by David Prince
Prop Styling by Pamela Duncan Silver

LINE A PATH

Elevate a staircase naturally, with birch vessels (they don't tip easily) sprouting greens. (For similar: Birch-bark 10-by-7-inch vase, $19, save-on-crafts.com.) Cut the stems so that the greens are about 10 inches taller than the rim. Here the mix is juniper, white pine, boxwood, and seeded eucalyptus, but any mix of several textures works. Place in a Ball jar with water, then set the jar inside the birch holder. (This setup makes it easy to change the water.) If the stems are very woody, pound the ends with a hammer to open them up a bit—they'll drink better.

"PLANT" A RUNNER

Dress up your table with a runner of white pine, seeded eucalyptus, boxwood, or other greens. It's an inviting arrangement that doesn't block conversations the way tall florals can. Layer clusters of leaves and sprigs—flatter ones first, shapelier ones on top—in a slightly undulating shape for a relaxed, natural look. (Opposite: AmeriHome metal side chairs, $210 for two, wayfair.com/RSchairs.)

Sprinkle in mercury-glass votives around the edges to cast a vintagey glow and keep the display contained.

Easy ice-bucket arrangement: Place a piece of floral foam inside. Insert handfuls of hardy greens; fill the gaps with delicates.

GARNISH A PLATE

Nestle a bit of seeded eucalyptus in a loosely rolled raw-edge napkin (an earthy color is nice) and wrap twice with twine. A sprig of evergreen works just as beautifully.

SHOW OFF STEMS IN STEMWARE

Give those underused Champagne flutes a temporary gig as bud vases. Fill each about halfway with water (it looks best if all the water lines match) and drop in two sprigs of lightweight greenery. Place alongside dinner plates to *spruce* up the whole table.

Hang the branch on the wall using large, clear 3M Command hooks (no hammering required).
Merry & Bright
SNOW place like HOME
Dreaming of a White Christmas
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
JOY
SEASON'S Greetings
A MERRY Christmas

GIVE GREETINGS THE GALLERY TREATMENT

A mounted bough of juniper (or another evergreen branch from the yard or a tree farm) turns holiday cards into wall art instead of counter clutter. Tie strands of wide ribbon about 12 inches apart, and clip on the cards using white metal brads (sold at office-supply stores).

CARDS FROM ALEXISMATTOXDESIGN.COM AND BELLEANDUNION.COM.

TRY A MODERN TAKE ON MISTLETOE

Wreathify a chandelier by winding floral wire (sold at craft shops and nurseries) around bunches of a feathery green, such as white pine, juniper, or cedar, then attaching the greens to the perimeter. Keep the rest of the decor minimal—you want this tricked-out fixture to be the star of the room.

THE FOUNDER OF SERVICE DOGS, INC., SHERI SOLTES, WITH TWO-YEAR-OLD RESCUE CHECHOTAH (RHYMES WITH DAKOTA). CHECHOTAH IS LEARNING TO HELP A NAVY VETERAN WHO DEALS WITH EPISODIC SEIZURES.

IS MY COPILOT

SHERI SOLTES AND HER TEAM TRAIN SHELTER DOGS TO BECOME SERVICE ANIMALS, THEN PAIR THEM WITH JUST THE RIGHT HUMANS. WHEN IT COMES TO MATCHMAKING LOVE STORIES, IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS.

Written by Virginia Sole-Smith Photographs by Dan Winters

ON A WARM, SUNNY DAY in Dripping Springs, Texas, Monica Johnson is trying to get a black retriever named Avalon to come stand by her wheelchair, using a signal called "close." It's Team Training Week at Service Dogs, Inc., where dogs in training meet their potential human partners.

Avalon, like all the dogs here, has been working with the training team for about eight months. When manager of training Becky McClintock says "close" while moving her hand in just the right way, Avalon immediately bounds into place. But for Monica (pictured opposite), who applied for a service dog in 2014, it's tougher. She has just met Avalon and has never had a service dog before. When Monica issues the cue for "close," Avalon stays put and stares straight into Monica's eyes. McClintock explains: "She thinks you're doing 'watch.' Try looking down to the left a little more, so she knows where you want her to go."

Monica tries again. And again and again. Avalon looks at her quizzically, then back at McClintock.

"I know I just need to breathe," says Monica, now 41, who is a social worker. "I'm just so overwhelmed. I've wanted this for so long, but now it's like, What if she doesn't like me? What if I mess up this brilliant dog?"

SAVED BY THE BARK

Service Dogs, Inc., rescues dogs "that other people have thrown away," as founder Sheri Soltes puts it, training them to work as support animals for people with hearing or mobility challenges. At the organization's facility in the Texas Hill Country, about 20 miles west of Austin, nine trainers work with about 25 dogs a year, all of whom come from shelters in Texas and Oklahoma. Since its founding, SDI has placed more than 1,000 dogs.

It all started in 1988, when Soltes, now 56, was a young trial lawyer unhappy in her work. "Basically [the job] was fighting over money, which I did not find fulfilling," she says. One day, she visited a doctor for stomach pain that she suspected was stress-induced. "The doctor gave me pills," she says, "but I never took them." She decided to change her life instead.

While looking for other opportunities, Soltes happened upon an article about assistance dogs, and the idea galvanized her. "I contacted Assistance Dogs International [which was mentioned in the article] for a list of hearing and service-dog organizations—there were 30 or so—and wrote to all of them," she says. She asked about starting such an organization herself, as there were none in Texas or nearby, and inquired about fund-raising, setting up a living situation for the dogs, and processing applicants—"all the infrastructure."

Soltes also researched training and discovered some things that concerned her. "I learned that most dog training involved force, domination, and punishment," she says. "I knew I didn't want to train like that."

A GENTLER WAY

Mentored by trainers at Sea World, in nearby San Antonio (says Soltes, "they made the mistake of letting me in the door, and I never left"), Soltes began learning a method called "positive reinforcement–based operant conditioning." With this system, trainers reinforce desired behaviors through rewards. When the dogs do something *un*desirable, trainers ignore the behavior and redirect rather than punish. Soltes explains that at SDI, "the dogs learn very quickly that when they lie down quietly in the kennel area, they're going to get a lot of wonderful treats, and when they jump on you, things get super-boring." From that foundation, SDI's team of trainers is able to build toward increasingly complex behaviors, like taking laundry out of the dryer or nudging a foot that has fallen off a wheelchair pedal. "Each of these dogs serves its [human] partner 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for at least 10 years," says Soltes. "Our goal is to make those years happy and meaningful for both the person and the dog, and we couldn't do that if we were training through force and domination. We have to train through love."

SDI trains and places dogs with clients for free. "I hated the idea of someone who really needs us having to fund-raise to make it happen," says Soltes. "We'll do that. They have enough on their plates."

MAKE ME A MATCH

One of the reasons Monica and Avalon are a good pair, says Soltes, is that Avalon is high-energy and Monica, who scuba dives and plays wheelchair basketball, is very active.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY AMBER GRIFFIN USING TEMPTU COSMETICS; WWW.AMBERMAKEUPDESIGN.COM; WARDROBE BY CRISTINA FACUNDO

MONICA & AVALON

Social worker Monica Johnson helps patients coping with spinal-cord injuries like hers. “I’ve wanted this for so long,” she says of her partnership with Avalon, which began this past summer.

RAY & EXCALIBUR

Pastor Ray McCoy and Excalibur have been together since 2009. Due to a medical condition, Ray is in danger of blacking out when he bends over. Excalibur picks things up so Ray doesn't have to bend, and he's able to help Ray up if he falls. "He's so much more than a service dog," says Ray. "He's my family."

To say that Monica is used to clearing hurdles is an understatement. Her lower body was paralyzed in a car accident when she was 25, and she works full-time as a hospital social worker, counseling others with spinal-cord injuries like hers.

But learning to work with a service dog is a different kind of challenge. Soltes likens it to learning to drive a stick shift, which she did at age 35. "I try to remember that moment of 'I cannot do this!' because that's how it feels for pretty much every client at some point during Team Training Week," she says. "Everyone gets exhausted. Sometimes there are tears."

But the positive environment SDI fosters and the gentle expertise of the team lift up everyone—the people as well as the animals. "Even when I'm getting frustrated, I feel so supported," says Monica. "They're all so patient."

LOVE TRUMPS FEAR

The dogs embody this same sensitivity and patience, as Pastor Ray McCoy (pictured opposite) can attest. Ray, age 48, the pastor for Believe Ministries, in Lampass, Texas, lives with painful masses inside his spinal cord that can cause him to black out when he moves the wrong way. "It had gotten to the point where my wife was afraid to leave me alone," says Ray. "We were going to have to consider 24-hour care." Instead, he got Excalibur, who assists him with everyday tasks. Less bending for Ray means less danger of blackouts. Excalibur also helps Ray up if he falls, reminds him to take his medication, and responds heroically in case of emergency.

Separate from the blackouts, Ray used to experience occasional seizures. Not anymore. Says Ray, "I haven't had a full-blown seizure in six years." This is largely due to Excalibur. He can sense when Ray is about to have a seizure even before Ray can—and he alerts Ray and his wife, so they can take measures to stop its progress.

Excalibur also knows that Ray needs to take pain medication every two hours around the clock. In the daytime, he nudges Ray at the right time (no one has a good answer as to how Excalibur knows the time), then heads to the medicine cabinet. At night Excalibur does something even more remarkable. He fetches a loaf of bread from the kitchen, brings it into the bedroom, places it on Ray's face, and licks Ray until he wakes up. Unbelievably, this behavior was self-taught. Excalibur *himself* started using a loaf of bread as a cue, perhaps because he's seen Ray have food with his medicine, and bread is a food that's easy for Excalibur to reach. "Excalibur is the only reason I'm able to be left alone by my wife and kids," says Ray.

This is not an overstatement. One day Ray blacked out while filling the bathtub. He hit his head and fell in. Ray regained consciousness as Excalibur was dragging him out by the ankle. When he was safe on the floor, Excalibur ran to fetch his cell phone without Ray's even issuing a cue.

"The kicker," says Soltes, "is that Excalibur was terrified of running water." (A previous owner may have abused the dog by tying him up and spraying him.) For Soltes, this is proof of what training through love can do—and of the extraordinary potential of the dogs that SDI rescues. "Excalibur was able to recognize an emergency, know what action to take, and overcome his own fear to save Ray," says Soltes. "That's because of the relationship they've built."

THE RIGHT STUFF

Picking which dogs to choose from the shelters is one of the more difficult aspects of the mission at SDI. "I'm not allowed to help anymore," says Soltes, who has two dogs and 10 cats of her own, and is drawn to rescue any creature with a sad face. Her team has developed strict criteria, focusing on dogs of about 18 to 30 months in age—old enough for the trainers to assess temperament but young enough to ensure plenty of good working years.

"Our goal is to make these years happy and meaningful for both the person and the dog. We couldn't do that if we were training through domination. We have to train through love," says Soltes.

"We're always happy when we adopt black dogs," says Sheri, "because statistically black dogs and black cats get picked the least at shelters, and that has nothing to do with how great an animal they are." SDI adopts 18 to 25 dogs a year, with the hope that about 15 will make it all the way through the training program. Those who don't are adopted as pets (via the SDI website, servicedogs.org). "It's not that those dogs flunk out," says Soltes. "This just wasn't their dream career." Usually the reasons are social. Some are not comfortable in a range of public places; others might be unable to maintain enough attention to be there as soon as the clients need them. "They're more free spirits," says Soltes. "But they've gotten the same training as our service dogs, so they make wonderful pets. And we give our adoptive families all the guidance they'll need to maintain that behavior."

FAMILY TIES

SDI puts clients through a thorough application process to ensure that their dogs will continue to be trained and well cared for once they move into their homes. Families are not allowed to own other dogs, which might distract a working animal, and they must commit to giving their dogs a daily exercise and training program, a diet of premium dog food, and regular vet visits.

For Megan Harris, 45, a freelance curriculum consultant in Austin, Texas, the work of caring for her hearing dog, Sherlock, is nothing compared with the peace of mind that he brings her. As a baby, Megan lost the hearing in her left ear due to bacterial meningitis, and by age 37 she was medically deaf in her right ear as well. A cochlear implant helps her hear much of the time. But Megan can't sleep or bathe with the implant's processor attached to her scalp, so she's often not wearing the device at home. "I spent a lot of time feeling unsafe when I was alone at night, because I wasn't able to hear my daughter call, and I wouldn't know if someone came into the house," says Megan. "For a long time, I dismissed my need for a hearing dog. I have such a supportive family, and we were getting by."

What Megan didn't realize until Sherlock arrived was that his presence would affect her husband and daughter as well. The first Halloween Sherlock was with the family, it became clear. Knowing that Megan had Sherlock allowed her husband, Adam, to chat with neighbors and their daughter, Amelia, to run ahead to the houses with the best candy. "They didn't have to worry about me not hearing a person or a car, and I didn't have to be on high alert," says Megan. "I'm not sure I had even acknowledged how bad our stress level was until we got Sherlock and suddenly we were free."

Dogs who don't make it all the way through training are adopted as pets. "It's not that those dogs flunk out," says Soltes. "This just isn't their dream career. They're more free spirits."

AIN'T NOTHIN' GOIN' ON BUT THE RENT

The hardest part of running a nonprofit like SDI is figuring out how to pay for it. Training costs about $45,000 per dog. And the dogs are placed for free with clients. "I hated the idea of someone who really needs us having to fundraise to make it happen," says Soltes. "We'll do that. They have enough on their plates." The SDI team patches together a budget each year with a combination of grants, private donations, and money collected at fundraising events. Soltes says what would allow the organization to help more people and rescue more dogs is a corporate partnership. She would like to see an SDI dog in a national commercial: "I just want you to see a service dog pressing the button on the vending machine or giving a cashier a credit card, then delivering the purchase and the card back to its disabled partner. That's the kind of thing these dogs do every day!" In the meantime, Soltes is grateful for every donation that comes SDI's way. "I tend to use good karma as a business plan," she jokes.

And somehow it works. Even with the constant uphill efforts of financing the operation, it's enormously rewarding. "The best part of the job is when you're driving away from the shelter with a dog and you know that he doesn't ever have to go back there," says Soltes. "I love looking a dog in the eye and telling him, 'You're safe now. You're going to have a good life.'"

A WIN-WIN

That goes double, of course, because it's not just the dogs who get a better life. To ensure that, after Team Training at the facility, SDI works for three months with dogs on specific tasks in their new surroundings. When Monica and Avalon go home together, SDI will come weekly to teach Avalon to retrieve Monica's wheelchair when it's out of reach, help her out of bed in the morning by tugging a rope, assist at the grocery store, become comfortable in restaurants, and more. Avalon will also be prepared to accompany Monica to work every day, where the patients of stroke and spinal-cord injuries whom Monica helps will see the possibilities of life with a service dog. "When you're newly injured, it's dark for a lot of us," says Monica. "You think, *That's it—I'll never be able to live on my own or do anything for myself.* Avalon is going to bring a lot of hope to a lot of people."

And so, on the second day of Team Training, Monica is back, reenergized and ready to try again. Trainer Becky McClintock looks on. "Close!" Monica tells Avalon, while dropping her shoulder and looking down to the left. This time, it works. Avalon hops over to the left side of Monica's wheelchair and sits, tail wagging with pride. Monica rubs her dog's head and lavishes her with praise, because Avalon is exactly where she's supposed to be. ■

To volunteer, donate, or learn more about Service Dogs, Inc., go to servicedogs.org.

MEGAN & SHERLOCK

Megan Harris is a mom and a teacher and is deaf. Sherlock has been part of her family for two years now. "I'm not even sure I acknowledged how bad our stress level was until I got Sherlock and suddenly we were free," she says.

Photographs by Gentl & Hyers Recipes by Rachel Soszynski
Food Styling by Susan Spungen Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

EASY HOMEMADE GIFTS

Yes, there are cookies. But there are also kimchi pickles, from-scratch crackers, and—hold on to your elf hat—old-school "puppy chow." We'll show you how to wrap them, too.

ROSEMARY, GINGER, AND GRAPEFRUIT SYRUP

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1 DAY**
MAKES **FIVE ¾-CUP GIFTS**

- 3 cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup freshly squeezed grapefruit juice, strained
- 5 2-inch-long slices peeled fresh ginger
- 12 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 6 2-inch strips grapefruit zest

IN A LARGE SAUCEPAN, combine the sugar, water, and grapefruit juice and stir over medium-high heat until the sugar is completely dissolved, 5 minutes. Gently bruise the ginger and rosemary with the back of a spoon to release some of their oils. Add them to the pot along with the grapefruit zest. Lower heat to medium and let cook for 5 minutes; do not boil. Remove from heat and let cool for 30 minutes. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

DIVIDE the ginger slices, rosemary sprigs, and grapefruit peel evenly among five 6-ounce Mason jars and fill with the syrup.

STORE in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

The sweet citrus syrup is a great base for cocktails (vodka, gin, or bourbon), especially a Holiday Old-Fashioned. Clip out and attach the recipe to the gift.

SALTED CHOCOLATE CARAMEL SPREAD

HANDS-ON TIME: **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **10 MINUTES**
MAKES **FOUR ¾-CUP GIFTS**

- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup hot tap water
- 2 cups dulce de leche
- 1½ cups unsalted roasted almonds
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoons flaky sea salt (such as Maldon), plus more for garnishing

IN A BOWL, whisk the cocoa powder with the water until smooth.

IN A BLENDER, combine the cocoa mixture, dulce de leche, almonds, oil, vanilla, and salt and process on high until smooth.

DIVIDE among 4 resealable rubber-rimmed jars.

STORE in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Top with a pinch of salt just before giving.

HOLIDAY OLD-FASHIONED

HANDS-ON TIME: **5 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **5 MINUTES**
MAKES **1 DRINK**

- ½ ounce Rosemary, Ginger, and Grapefruit Syrup, plus a piece of zest
- 3 dashes bitters
- 2 ounces bourbon
- Ice
- 1 tablespoon club soda

ADD the syrup, bitters, and bourbon to a shaker full of ice. Shake and strain into a rocks glass. Top with the club soda and garnish with a piece of zest from the syrup jar.

CHOCOLATE, APRICOT, AND PECAN COOKIE DOUGH

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **2½ HOURS**
MAKES **2 LOGS**

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 1½ cups coarsely chopped dried apricots
- 1½ cups chopped pecans

IN A BOWL, mix the flour, baking soda, and salt. In another bowl, whisk the butter, sugars, eggs, and vanilla until smooth. Stir in the flour mixture, chocolate chips, apricots, and pecans. Chill for 2 hours.

SHAPE into two 1½-inch logs. (See technique on page 208.)

STORE in waxed paper in the refrigerator for up to 5 days (or freeze for up to 2 weeks).

TO BAKE: Cut into ½-inch slices (about 2 tablespoons each) and bake at 350° F for 15 minutes.

You can give this all season long—start with a Hanukkah-party hostess. You don't even need to bake the dough. Shape it into a log, wrap in wax paper, and refrigerate or freeze overnight before packaging and presenting.
chocolate, apricot, and pecan cookie dough

rustic
sage
crackers

RUSTIC SAGE CRACKERS

HANDS-ON TIME: **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **2 HOURS, 15 MINUTES (INCLUDING CHILLING)**
MAKES **4 LARGE CRACKERS**

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling
- 4 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 to 2 tablespoons cold water
- 1 egg white, whisked
- 1¼ cups loosely packed fresh sage leaves (about 60 leaves)
- Flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)

PULSE the flour, butter, sugar, and kosher salt in a food processor until a crumbly meal forms, about 30 seconds. Add the sour cream and process until evenly mixed, 15 seconds more. Add the water 1 tablespoon at a time and pulse until the dough just comes together, 30 seconds. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Break into uneven pieces, stack, and wrap in bunches to give with your favorite cheese.

HEAT oven to 400° F, with the racks positioned in the middle third. Divide the dough into 4 pieces. Cut four 12-by-17-inch sheets of parchment paper. Working with one piece of dough at a time, place the dough on a parchment sheet and, with a floured rolling pin, roll the dough until it's paper thin (about 10 inches in diameter). Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet.

BRUSH the dough with the egg white and arrange 15 of the sage leaves on top, brushing them with a bit more egg white to stick. Sprinkle the dough with ½ teaspoon of the sea salt. Repeat with the remaining parchment, dough, egg white, sage, and sea salt.

BAKE, 2 at a time, until the crackers are nicely browned and bubbled, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely, 30 minutes. Break into pieces.

STORE in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

QUICK KIMCHI PICKLES

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **15 MINUTES**
MAKES **FOUR 6-OUNCE GIFTS**

- 8 seedless Persian or pickling cucumbers, each cut lengthwise into 6 spears (4 inches by ½ inch)
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 4 2-inch pieces fresh ginger, thinly sliced
- 2 cups distilled white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons sriracha or another chili sauce
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil

PACK 4 resealable rubber-rimmed jars with the cucumber spears, garlic, and ginger, dividing evenly.

HEAT the vinegar, water, sugar, and salt in a saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring until the sugar and salt dissolve, 5 minutes. Stir in the sriracha and sesame oil.

DIVIDE the brine evenly among the packed jars and let cool.

STORE in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

BUTTERY WHOLE-GRAIN PANCAKES

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **25 MINUTES**
MAKES **10 TO 12 PANCAKES**

- 2 large eggs
- ½ stick unsalted butter, melted, plus more for the skillet
- 1½ cups whole milk
- 1 package Whole-Grain Pancake Mix
- Butter and maple syrup, for serving

WHISK the eggs, butter, and milk in a bowl. Add the dry mix and whisk until smooth. Let stand for 15 minutes (for lighter pancakes).

HEAT a large griddle or buttered nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Drop ¼-cup mounds of batter into the skillet (3 to 4 pancakes per batch) and cook until the batter begins to bubble on the surface, about 2 minutes. Flip and cook for 2 minutes more.

TRANSFER to serving plates. Repeat with the remaining batter. Serve hot with butter and syrup.

Include this recipe on a hang tag with the wrapped pancake mix.

WHOLE-GRAIN PANCAKE MIX

HANDS-ON TIME: **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **10 MINUTES**
MAKES **FOUR 2-CUP GIFTS**

- ⅔ cup light brown sugar
- 6 cups white whole-wheat flour
- 2 cups yellow cornmeal
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt

MASH the brown sugar with a fork in a mixing bowl to get rid of any lumps. Whisk in the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.

DIVIDE into airtight bags or jars.

STORE at room temperature for up to 1 month.

SLOW-COOKER CHERRY TOMATO CONFIT

HANDS-ON TIME: **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **4 HOURS, 10 MINUTES**
MAKES: **SIX ¾-CUP OR FOUR 1⅛-CUP GIFTS**

- 3 pounds mixed cherry and grape tomatoes (about 4 pints)
- 1 bunch fresh thyme
- 1 bunch fresh rosemary
- 1½ cups extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt

COMBINE the tomatoes, thyme, rosemary, oil, and salt in the bowl of a 4- to 6-quart slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for 4 hours, or until the tomatoes are softened and slightly wrinkled.

LET COOL completely. Divide the tomatoes, cooking juices, oil, and herbs among 4 or 6 resealable rubber-rimmed jars.

STORE in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

MORE DELICIOUS DIY
For eight more edible gift ideas, go to realsimple.com/homemadefoodgifts.

SALTY PEANUT "PUPPY CHOW"

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **45 MINUTES**
MAKES: **TWO 4½-CUP GIFTS**

- 1½ cups semisweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 8 cups rice and corn cereals, mixed
- 1 cup salted roasted peanuts
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar

LINE a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper; set aside. Melt the chocolate chips, peanut butter, and butter in a large microwave-safe bowl in the microwave on high, stirring every 30 seconds, until melted and smooth, about 1½ minutes. Add the cereals to the bowl and fold in until completely coated.

SPREAD the mixture on the lined baking sheet. Sprinkle with the peanuts and let cool completely. Break apart.

DUST with the sugar and toss until coated. Refrigerate until set.

STORE in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Double or triple this recipe and give big batches in leftover popcorn tins or decorated coffee cans.

LET'S WRAP

Package gifts in sturdy glass jars (learn how to prep them on page 208) or cellophane, paper, or tissue that's labeled "food-safe." Here's where to buy the packaging shown on these pages.

ROSEMARY, GINGER, AND GRAPEFRUIT SYRUP: **The Mason Shaker,** $30, masonshaker.com.

CHOCOLATE, APRICOT, AND PECAN COOKIE DOUGH: **Birch Veneer Wine Bottle Cylinder,** $17, containerstore.com.

SALTY PEANUT "PUPPY CHOW": **If You Care Sub/Mini Baguette Sandwich Bags,** $7 for 30, Whole Foods.

SPICED CRANBERRY TOASTER TARTS

HANDS-ON TIME: **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **45 MINUTES**
MAKES: **6 TARTS**

- ⅓ cup orange marmalade
- ¼ cup chopped dried cranberries
- 1 tablespoon chopped candied ginger
- ⅛ teaspoon cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 package prerolled piecrusts (containing 2 crusts)
- Brown sanding sugar, for sprinkling

HEAT oven to 350° F. In a bowl, combine the marmalade, cranberries, ginger, cinnamon, and salt.

ROLL each piecrust with a rolling pin until it's ⅛ inch thick. Trim the edges to create 2 large rectangles (discard the scraps), then cut each rectangle into thirds crosswise.

LINE a large rimmed baking sheet or cookie sheet with parchment paper. Using the back of a spoon, spread each piece of dough with a scant tablespoon of the filling, leaving a ¾-inch border on every side. Brush the edges with water, fold the dough in half, and crimp the edges with a fork.

TRANSFER the tarts to the prepared baking sheet. Brush the tops and edges with water and sprinkle each evenly with a generous teaspoon of the sanding sugar.

BAKE the tarts until browned, 18 to 20 minutes. Cool completely.

STORE in an airtight container for up to 3 days (or freeze, tightly wrapped, for up to 1 week.)

spiced
cranberry toaster
tarts
salty
peanut "puppy
chow"

WHY I COOK®

FOR THE
HOLIDAYS

WHATEVER THE REASON. WHATEVER THE DISH.
MAKE IT DELICIOUS WITH *SWANSON*.®

Broths and stocks for perfect gravy, stuffing and more.

Find recipes at **SwansonWhyICook.com**.

© 2015 CSC Brands, LP

Food

Quick Cooking (186, 189, 198, 200, 204)
Healthy Pick (198, 204)
Freezable (186, 190, 203)
Make Ahead (186, 189, 190, 197, 203)
Big Batch (186, 189, 190, 197)
Slow Cooker (190, 197)
One Pot (186, 189, 190, 207)
Whole-Grain (189, 190, 197, 204)
Vegetarian (186, 189, 190, 198, 207)
Gluten-Free (186, 189, 190, 198, 200, 203, 207)

PRETTY FILLING
Cauliflower is hearty enough to star in a main course when it's roasted—like in the dinner-salad recipe on page 198.

BETTER BASIL
If you spot purple-tinged Thai basil at the market, grab it. It holds up to heat better than Italian basil (meaning less wilting). Sprinkle it over Pork and Butternut Squash Curry Soup (page 203).

Photographs by Johnny Miller
Food Styling by Rebecca Jurkevich

SET DESIGN BY JEFFREY W. MILLER

ADVERTISEMENT

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

THREE READERS SHARE THEIR FAVORITE TRADITIONS FOR MAKING A MEMORY-FILLED HOLIDAY SEASON.

Gretchen H.

Baking delicious treats to share with friends

Spending time together in the kitchen is always a favorite activity of ours. Each year we pick a new holiday cookie to try, and bake enough to share with our family, friends and neighbors. I get some festive ribbon and the cute Glad holiday containers, and then we pack them up for the perfect little gifts!

photo by Courtney Whitmore, Pizzazzerie.com

Jenny H.

We buy an ornament to celebrate a special memory from the year

Decorating the tree is so fun because we talk about each of the ornaments from previous years and reminisce about some of our favorite memories, like our kids being born or special family vacations.

Angie S.

Santa's helper rewards acts of kindness

The most important thing to me is filling our house with holiday spirit. To help encourage generosity, Santa's helper appears in your room when you've done something nice for others. It's a great way to make the season fun and exciting, and recognize our kids for little acts of kindness.

GET A $5 TARGET GIFTCARD

when you buy two of the participating products from **Quaker®, M&M'S® and Glad®**

Get a $5 Target GiftCard from REAL SIMPLE by submitting your proof of purchase. Upload a photo of your Target in-store receipt or online order confirmation indicating a minimum purchase of any two of the offered brands (M&M'S®, Glad® and/or Quaker®) and you could receive a $5 Target GiftCard via e-mail from REAL SIMPLE. Qualifying purchase must be made between 11/14/15 and 12/31/15 in a single transaction.

Enter your contact information and upload the photo of an in-store receipt or online order confirmation featuring a qualifying product to www.realsimple.com/target no later than 1/15/16.

Limited-time offer, while supplies last. Only the first 500 qualified submissions will receive the $5 Target GiftCard. Limit one Target GiftCard per household. Purchase of the qualifying two offered brands (M&M'S®, Glad® and/or Quaker®) products must be made between 11/14/15 and 12/31/15. Proof of purchase must be in the form of a photo of an in-store receipt or online order confirmation and include two qualifying M&M'S®, Glad® and/or Quaker® products. Visit www.realsimple.com/target to upload your proof of purchase, along with your contact information. Must be received by 1/15/16. All $5 Target e-GiftCards will be sent to qualifying purchasers by 1/25/16. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, late or misdirected submissions of Target GiftCard. Any attempt at fraud may lead to disqualification and further legal action. Void where prohibited by law.

The Bullseye Design, Target and Target GiftCard are registered trademarks of Target Brands, Inc. All rights reserved. Terms and conditions are applied to GiftCards. Target is not a participating partner in or sponsor of this offer. Target and The Quaker Oats Company are not participating partners or sponsors of this offer.

REAL SIMPLE is a registered trademark of Time Inc. and is used under license.

©2015 TQOC

Quaker® No-Bake M&M'S® Cookies is not a Heart-Healthy Recipe. M&M'S® and SNICKERS® are registered trademarks of Mars, Incorporated. GLAD is a registered trademark of The Glad Products Company. The Bullseye Design, Target and Target GiftCards are registered trademarks of Target Brands, Inc. Terms and conditions are applied to Gift Cards. Target is not a participating partner in or sponsor of this offer.

memories in the baking

Quaker® M&M'S® Cookies Keep them fresh with GLAD

YIELD:
20–25 cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Quaker® Oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked)
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 1 bag M&M'S® Holiday Baking Minis
- ⅓ cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Optional Mix-in:
1–2 pouches SNICKERS® Bites, 8 oz.

PREPARATION:

1. Stir all ingredients together in a medium bowl until thoroughly mixed. Cover and let chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
2. Once chilled, roll into balls approximately 1" in diameter.
3. Store in GLAD® containers, bags or wraps.

More recipes at:
holidaybakingmemories.com

AVAILABLE AT TARGET

roll out the savings

Download Cartwheel to save on Quaker® products, M&M'S® products and Glad® products.

cartwheel™
Target savings, mobile style.

GET IT ON Google play | Download on the App Store

What's your egg company feeding you?

Their cartons say 'farm fresh.' But, there's nothing 'fresh' about a factory farm.
Pete & Gerry's eggs are USDA certified organic from small family farms.
That means you actually get what you think you're getting.

Small Family Farms.
HEALTH GROWS HERE.

© Pete and Gerry's Organics, LLC 2015

Quick Cooking
Healthy Pick
Freezable
Make Ahead
Big Batch
Slow Cooker
One Pot
Whole-Grain
Vegetarian
Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

1

Slow-cooker Moroccan-spiced chicken thighs with couscous

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **3 HOURS, 15 MINUTES TO 7 HOURS, 15 MINUTES** SERVES **6**

- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- ¾ teaspoon cinnamon
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 pound large carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ⅓ cup pitted black olives
- 1 cup whole-wheat couscous
- Fresh cilantro, for serving

MIX the cumin, coriander, cinnamon, and 1 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a 4- to 6-quart slow cooker. Add the chicken and toss to coat in the spice mixture. Add the tomatoes, carrots, and olives.

COVER and cook on low for 6 to 7 hours or on high for 3 to 4 hours, until the chicken is tender. Shred the meat and return it to the liquid with the vegetables.

TEN minutes before serving, prepare the couscous according to the package directions.

SERVE the chicken and vegetables over the couscous, topped with the cilantro.

Recipes by Lindsay Hunt

FOOD

NUTRITION
Get details on fat, calories, and sodium at the bottom of each recipe on RealSimple.com.

- ∞ Quick Cooking
- ∞ Healthy Pick
- ( ) Freezable
- ( ) Make Ahead
- ( ) Big Batch
- ( ) Slow Cooker
- ( ) One Pot
- ( ) Whole-Grain
- ∞ Vegetarian
- ∞ Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

2

Roasted cauliflower and radish salad with soft-cooked eggs

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 1 small head cauliflower (about 1 pound), cut into small florets
- 6 radishes, halved or quartered if large
- 1 15.5-ounce can chickpeas, rinsed and patted dry
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 8 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 12 cups baby spinach (10 ounces)
- ½ cup roasted almonds, chopped

HEAT oven to 425° F.

TOSS the cauliflower, radishes, chickpeas, 3 tablespoons of the olive oil, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper on 2 rimmed baking sheets. Roast, tossing once, until the cauliflower is crisp-tender, 18 to 22 minutes.

MEANWHILE, bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Gently lower the eggs into the saucepan and cook for 7 minutes. Drain and cool under running water; peel and halve.

WHISK the vinegar, mustard, the remaining 3 tablespoons of olive oil, and ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add the spinach, almonds, and cauliflower mixture and toss to combine. Serve topped with the eggs.

© 2015 Kraft Foods

SELECTS

NATURAL^

SLOW ROASTED TURKEY BREAST

^NO ARTIFICIAL INGREDIENTS
NO ARTIFICIAL PRESERVATIVES
NO ADDED HORMONES+
NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS
NO ARTIFICIAL COLORS
NO GLUTEN
NO BY-PRODUCTS

Great taste is in our nature.

Oscar Mayer

^MINIMALLY PROCESSED + FEDERAL REGULATIONS PROHIBIT THE USE OF HORMONES IN POULTRY.

- [x] Quick Cooking
- [ ] Healthy Pick
- [ ] Freezable
- [ ] Make Ahead
- [ ] Big Batch
- [ ] Slow Cooker
- [ ] One Pot
- [ ] Whole-Grain
- [ ] Vegetarian
- [x] Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

3

Hanger steaks with watercress, grapefruit, and red onion salad

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 2 grapefruit
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ pounds hanger steak, center membrane removed and steak cut into 4 pieces
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 2 bunches watercress, thick stems removed
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds

CUT away the peel and pith of the grapefruit. Working over a small bowl, cut along both sides of each grapefruit segment, releasing the segments into the bowl. Squeeze the membrane over a large bowl to release the juice. (You'll need 3 tablespoons.)

TOSS the juice with the onion, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Let sit, tossing occasionally, until the onion has softened, 10 minutes (and up to 1 hour).

MEANWHILE, heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Season the steak with the oregano, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the steak registers 130° F, 4 minutes per side for medium-rare. Let rest for 5 minutes, then slice against the grain.

JUST before serving, add the watercress, grapefruit segments, sesame seeds, wilted onion, and the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil and toss to coat.

SERVE the steak with the grapefruit salad, sprinkled with the sesame seeds.

COOKIE BUTTER CHEESECAKE

Prep Time: 30 min. | Total Time: 6 hours 30 min. (incl. refrigerating) | Makes: 16 servings

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1 pkg. (7.7 oz.) European-style cookies for coffee (speculoos cookies), divided
- 4 pkgs. (8 oz. each) PHILADELPHIA Cream Cheese, softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 cup European-style cookie butter (speculoos cookie butter)

MAKE IT

HEAT oven to 325°F.
Reserve 6 cookies. Finely crush remaining cookies; press into bottom of 9-inch spring form pan.

BEAT cream cheese, sugars, vanilla and spices in large bowl with mixer until blended. Add eggs, 1 at a time, mixing on low speed after each just until blended. Pour over crust.

BAKE 1 hour or until center is almost set.
Run knife around rim of pan to loosen cake; cool before removing rim. Refrigerate cheesecake 4 hours.

CRUSH remaining cookies coarsely; sprinkle over cheesecake just before serving.

MICROWAVE cookie butter in microwaveable bowl on HIGH 30 sec. or until heated through; stir. Drizzle over cheesecake.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE *Made* WITH

© 2015 Kraft Foods

START WITH PURE FLAVORS.
END WITH PURE CHEER.

McCormick® Herbed Prime Rib

2 tbsp. **McCormick Basil Leaves**
2 tbsp. **McCormick Oregano Leaves**
1 tbsp. **McCormick Garlic Powder**
2 tsp. **McCormick Onion Powder**
1 tsp. **McCormick Ground Black Pepper**
1 boneless beef rib roast (5 to 6 lbs.)
2 tbsp. oil
1 tsp. salt

MIX first 5 ingredients in small bowl. Set aside. Trim excess fat from top of beef, leaving a layer of fat about 1/4-inch thick. Place roast on rack in shallow roasting pan. Brush beef with oil. Sprinkle with salt. Coat with seasoning mixture.

ROAST, uncovered, in preheated 350°F oven until internal temperature reaches 130°F for medium-rare (1 3/4 to 2 1/4 hours) or 140°F for medium (2 1/4 to 2 3/4 hours). Begin checking internal temperature of roast with meat thermometer 30 minutes before estimated end cook time. Cover with foil and let stand 15 minutes before carving. The temperature of the meat will rise about 10°F during standing.

Makes 16 servings.

Tip: To prepare recipe with roasted vegetables, visit **mccormick.com**

At McCormick, we believe pure tastes better. That's why our herbs and spices have no added fillers. Just 100% pure flavor. For more great-tasting recipes, visit mccormick.com

EASY DINNER

4

Pork and butternut squash curry soup

Quick Cooking ( )
Healthy Pick ( )
Freezable (X)
Make Ahead (X)
Big Batch ( )
Slow Cooker ( )
One Pot ( )
Whole-Grain ( )
Vegetarian ( )
Gluten-Free (X)

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **45 MINUTES** SERVES 4

- 8 ounces rice noodles
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1¼ pounds boneless pork loin, cut into 1½-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons Thai green curry paste (found in the international aisle)
- 1 bunch scallions, white and green parts sliced separately
- 1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
- 1 medium butternut squash (about 1½ pounds)—peeled, seeded, and cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1 15-ounce can unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon Asian fish sauce, plus more for serving
- Torn fresh basil and lime wedges, for serving

COOK the noodles according to the package directions.

MEANWHILE, heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the pork and cook, turning, until browned on all sides, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Add the curry paste, scallion whites, and ginger. Cook, stirring, until the paste darkens, about 1 minute.

ADD the squash and 2 cups water. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until the squash is tender, 7 to 9 minutes. Stir in the reserved pork, coconut milk, and fish sauce and cook until the pork is cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the noodles.

SERVE the soup topped with the basil, lime wedges, and scallion greens.

MAKE AHEAD Make the soup, keeping the noodles and garnishes separate, up to 2 days in advance. To serve, warm over low heat, add the noodles, and top with the lime, basil, and scallions.

TOP IT OFF WITH PURE FLAVOR.

McCormick®
Brown Gravy

AVAILABLE IN GLUTEN-FREE

PURE TASTES BETTER.

- No MSG
- No Artificial Flavors

WITH NATURAL SPICES

© 2015 McCormick & Co., Inc.

Flavor hails from Smithfield.

TWICE BAKED SWEET POTATOES
WITH BACON

INGREDIENTS

- 6 slices of cooked **Smithfield Bacon**
- 6 medium sweet potatoes
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 3 tbsp brown sugar, divided
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- 6 tbsp marshmallow creme

DIRECTIONS

Bake sweet potatoes for 40–50 minutes at 350°F. Cut off top 1/3 of potato and scoop out flesh, leaving ¼ inch in shell. Mix potato with butter, cream, 2 tbsp brown sugar, nutmeg, salt and pepper and spoon back into reserved potato shells. Top each with 1 strip bacon cut into pieces, 1 tablespoon marshmallow creme, then sprinkle all with remaining brown sugar. Broil for 3–5 minutes or until marshmallow creme is toasty brown. Serve hot!

- Quick Cooking
- Healthy Pick
- Freezable
- Make Ahead
- Big Batch
- Slow Cooker
- One Pot
- Whole-Grain
- Vegetarian
- Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

5

Roasted salmon with crispy broccoli and quinoa

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 1 large head broccoli (about 1½ pounds), cut into small florets
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 small red chili—halved, seeded, and thinly sliced, plus more for serving
- ¼ cup canola oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 6-ounce skinless salmon fillets
- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- ¼ cup roasted peanuts, roughly chopped

HEAT oven to 425° F with a rack positioned in the upper third. Toss the broccoli, garlic, chili, 2 tablespoons of the oil, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper on a rimmed baking sheet. Nestle the salmon in the broccoli and season with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Roast, tossing the broccoli once, until the salmon is just opaque but still slightly pink in the center and the broccoli is crisp-tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Flake the salmon into large chunks.

MEANWHILE, cook the quinoa according to package directions.

WHISK the vinegar, soy sauce, and the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil in a small bowl.

SERVE the salmon and broccoli over the quinoa, topped with the peanuts and the soy-vinegar sauce.

ALL THE MAKINGS OF A
JOYFUL
TRADITION.
This season, give your guests a reason to celebrate with hickory-smoked, spiral sliced Smithfield Ham. Our flavorful, mouthwatering hams have that legendary flavor that gets everyone into the holiday spirit.
Flavor hails from Smithfield®
For recipes and more, visit smithfield.com
©2015 Smithfield Foods

NUTRITIONALLY AWESOME AND STRAWBERRILY SUPERB.

Special K®

Nutrient rich, calorie smart Special K® Red Berries has delicious whole grains and real strawberries to nourish you on to amazing things.

®, TM, © 2015 Kellogg NA Co.

GET CRACKIN'
For more ways to eat eggs in the morning, go to realsimple.com/eggsforbreakfast.

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 6 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon drained capers
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill, plus more for garnishing
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 8 eggs
- 1 cup crumbled Feta

HEAT oven to 425° F.

STIR together the oil, tomatoes, scallions, capers, dill, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a medium ovenproof nonstick skillet.

BAKE in oven until the tomatoes and scallions are softened and starting to caramelize, 13 to 15 minutes.

WHISK the eggs in a bowl. Add the Feta and season with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper.

ADD the eggs to the skillet. Use a wooden spoon to distribute the tomatoes evenly, if necessary. Lower the heat to 375° F and carefully return the skillet to oven.

COOK until the frittata is just set in the middle, 10 to 12 minutes.

SERVE garnished with more chopped dill.

Tomato, Feta, and dill frittata

Fritta-*da!* A colorful egg dish that tastes great warm, at room temperature, and even cold. (Slice leftovers straight from the refrigerator for an easy lunch.)

TIP
A frittata puffs in the oven—don't freak out!—then sinks as it cools. So how can you tell if it's set in the middle? Cut a small slit in the center. If raw egg oozes out, bake for 3 to 5 minutes more.

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **6**

Recipe by Rachel Soszynski
Photograph by David Meredith
Food Styling by Susie Theodorou

SET DESIGN BY JEFFREY W. MILLER

Things Cooks Know

Simplifying strategies, techniques, and tips—from the *Real Simple* test kitchen to yours

How to prep jars for packing gifts

Glass jars are a polished way to present holiday treats, like Cherry Tomato Confit (page 190) and Homemade Chocolate Caramel Spread (page 186). To clean them efficiently, whether you're reusing jam jars or you bought brand-new jars, use the dishwasher. Why? Hand washing can cross-contaminate, and residual soap can turn food sour. While the machine is running, prepare the recipe; remove the jars only when you're ready to fill them. That way, they will be warm and won't crack when you pour in the hot food. After filling, write the use-by date (usually 2 weeks later) on a piece of pretty washi tape and stick it on the bottom.

Kitchen hack: 4 uses for distilled white vinegar

This neutral-tasting vinegar made from distilled alcohol is an inexpensive miracle worker, handy for cooking and cleaning, thanks to its high acidity.

NEATER EGGS. Add a couple of tablespoons to the boiling or poaching water to help the whites set more quickly. If a shell cracks when you're boiling whole eggs, the vinegar will help the white to set and keep it from oozing. It also prevents poached eggs from fraying.

NO-STICK PASTA. Sure, stirring during boiling keeps a giant mass from forming. But the noodles are still sticky after draining. (Alkaline water is to blame.) A tablespoon of white vinegar neutralizes the water and reduces starchiness. Try adding some to the boiling water for fluffier white rice, too.

FLAVOR FIXER. There's no magical cure for overly sweet or salty food. But a dash of vinegar will highlight individual components of a sauce, a soup, or a braise, tricking your taste buds into ignoring an overall off flavor.

PRODUCE CLEANER. Many store-bought produce cleaners are expensive and contain chemicals. Instead, fill a spray bottle with 3 cups water and 1 cup vinegar. Spritz fruits and vegetables, then rinse thoroughly with water to remove 98 percent of surface bacteria.

Written by Heath Goldman

Illustrations by Melinda Josie

DIY SLICE-AND-BAKE COOKIES

A refrigerated or frozen log of dough means you can have cookies in a snap for unexpected guests or late-night cravings. Follow this easy, three-step technique for shaping a flawless (no flat sides!) roll.

STEP 1: In the middle of a 12-inch-long sheet of parchment paper, shape the cookie dough into a log that's slightly wider than the desired diameter of the finished cookie.
STEP 2: Fold one side of the parchment over the log. Press a ruler firmly against the length of the dough while pulling the bottom of the sheet of parchment toward you. Continue pressing and pulling, making sure you apply even pressure, until the log is smooth and reaches the desired diameter.
STEP 3: Roll the remaining parchment around the log, then gently twist both ends closed. To prevent one side from flattening in the refrigerator, roll the log in a thick layer of wrapping paper if you're gifting (for a recipe, see page 186), or slit open the long side of a paper-towel tube and place the log inside.

nly

Eggland's Best gives you the best in taste & nutrition.

THINK ALL EGGS ARE THE SAME? Then you haven't experienced Eggland's Best.

BrandSpark MOST TRUSTED BY SHOPPERS 2015 In Partnership with Better Homes and Gardens

Compared to ordinary eggs, Eggland's Best eggs have four times the Vitamin D, more than double the Omega 3, 10 times the Vitamin E, and 25 percent less saturated fat. Plus, EBs are a good source of Vitamin B5 and Riboflavin, contain only 60 calories, and stay fresher longer.

Hungry for better taste? EBs deliver more of the farm-fresh flavor you and your family love. Any way you cook them!

So why settle for ordinary when you can enjoy the best? **Eggland's Best.**

**Voted Most Trusted Egg Brand by American shoppers. Based on the 2015 BrandSpark/Better Homes and Gardens American Shopper Study.*

egglandsbest.com

FARM FRESH EGG·LAND'S BEST

Better Taste. Better Nutrition.
Better Eggs.®

SIMPLYGIFTS

hip mom jewelry

10% OFF coupon code SIMPLE10

SILVER TWO CHARM NECKLACE

Find more gifts for Hip Moms at
www.hipmomjewelry.com

The Original, Patented
PeriodPanteez
just the hug you need

No more worries, Period!
•Sleek, multi-layered, leak-resistant, eco girl short
•Protect fashion/sheets, ease cramps/bloat, washable
•Worn by celebs, luxury comfort, shapewear support
1-888-878-8364
USA Made
www.PeriodPanteez.com

Steve's has all the top name brand
BLINDS & WALLPAPER
25% to 85% off EVERYDAY
LEVOLOR
Bali WAVERLY & many more!
Free Shipping on most orders!
Call now for your FREE QUOTE
1·800·649·9907
or shop online at
www.StevesBlinds.com
You always have Steve's 100% lowest price & satisfaction guarantees!

BellaCopper Solid Copper
Heat Diffusers & Defroster Plates

They really work, because copper conducts heat better, a whole lot better! Works on gas, electric, and glass top & ceramic top stoves.
Cook better now! www.bellacopper.com

KINEKT
INTERACTIVE JEWELRY

888-600-8494 | kinektdesign.com

WeatherTech®
Automotive Accessories

Available in Black, Tan and Grey
for over 900 Applications

Order Now: 800-441-6287
WeatherTech.com

View our full line of Automotive Accessories at WeatherTech.com

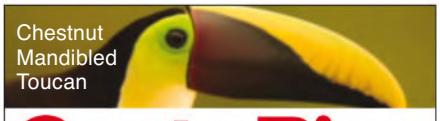
© 2015 by MacNeil IP LLC

steripod®

protect and freshen your toothbrush

patented "Active Vapors" keep your toothbrush smelling clean and fresh. steripod® is perfect for the home, travel or trips to the gym.
Visit getsteripod.com to find a store near you or purchase online.
*Free shipping in the U.S.A.

look for steripod at
BED BATH & BEYOND
Walmart TARGET
*free shipping on selected products only



Costa Rica
9-DAY TOUR $1095
Volcanoes, Rainforests, Beaches, with All Meals Included! Join the smart shoppers and experienced travelers who rely on Caravan for a wonderful vacation. Tax, fees extra.

#1 Value, Guided Tours Since 1952

Guatemala	10 days	$1295
Costa Rica	9 days	$1095
Panama & Canal	8 days	$1195
Nova Scotia	10 days	$1395
Canadian Rockies	9 days	$1595
Grand Canyon	8 days	$1395
California Coast	8 days	$1295
Mount Rushmore	8 days	$1295
New England	8 days	$1295

"Brilliant, Affordable Pricing"
–Arthur Frommer, Travel Editor

FREE 28-Page Brochure:
caravan.com 1-800-Caravan
caravan

To advertise in Simply Shopping, contact M.I. Integrated Media at 860.542.5180 • Visit these advertisers online: www.mi-ms.com/simplyshopping

SIMPLYGIFTS

Visit Paradise in 2016!

Hawaii
Four-Island Tour
13 days from $1,899*

Discover Hawaii - the land of Aloha - with the Hawaii Travel Experts! YMT has been taking guests to the Aloha State for nearly 50 years. We have developed the perfect tour that includes the best of Oahu, Kauai, Maui and the Big Island of Hawaii with plenty of down time for exploring on your own, or simply relaxing on the beach - all at a very affordable price.
Departs weekly January-March, 2016

*Prices are per person, double occupancy. Plus $199 taxes & government fees. Add-on airfare is available. Receive $75 p/p in Vacation Fun money if booked by 12/31/15, Fun Money will be distributed by Visa gift card and mailed out after final payment is received. Seasonal surcharges and single supplements may apply. Ask your Travel Consultant for details.

YMT vacations It's time to travel!
1-888-817-1357
ymtvacations.com
Mention promo code TM130206

Coobie
Seamless Bras

HolidayTrial Offer! Buy one bra, get another bra free to give as a gift!
Use Code: RSBOGO
at ShopCoobie.com
888-789-1037 info@totalstockroom.com

EXPRESSIONERY
INK AND PAPER GOODS

30% OFF STAMPS*
SHOP EXPRESSIONERY.COM
Use code: GIFTS30
*See site for details

GRUND

Expect the best. Luxurious bath rugs from Grund

Add a little comfort and joy to your bathroom this Holiday season with a new Grund bath rug. For a limited time, enjoy 20% off your order on grundamerica.com when you use code JOY20.

Try it once, and you'll feel the difference.®

www.grundamerica.com
Also available at bedbathbeyond.com, wayfair.com, amazon.com, and birchlane.com

CustomInk
Design T-shirts Online

Create Amazing T-shirts!

SAVE $10 | For details
visit customink.com/rsimple

To advertise in Simply Shopping, contact M.I. Integrated Media at 860.542.5180 • Visit these advertisers online: www.mi-ms.com/simplyshopping

Kinky-Curly®

FIGHT THE FRIZZ

Moisturize & Define your curls.

Achieve shiny, healthy hair with Kinky-Curly Hair Products. Lightweight, non-greasy & made with ALL NATURAL ingredients. Great for all hair types.

Available at WHOLE FOODS MARKET TARGET®

WWW.KINKY-CURLY.COM

FIX THE FADE® WITH TOUCHBACK®

TouchBack Color Depositing Shampoo and Conditioner add back vibrant color and shine to faded hair, without harsh chemicals (no ammonia or peroxide). Color lasts through 3 shampoos. **www.TouchBackColor.com**

CVS/pharmacy

THEIR NEW HAPPY PLACE

If you're looking for a unique holiday gift for your special little one, a soft and cuddly Cocoon Bean Bag gives them a space all their own. **866.384.2802 • jaxxbeanbags.com**

dorm co.com College Dorm Supplies Superstore

COLLEGE CHRISTMAS GIFT—TRUNKS

DormCo.com has over 65 unique and affordable trunk options available. Beyond trunks, DormCo.com is considered the leader in college dorm supplies with over 4,500 items. Find everything from Twin XL Bedding and Mini-Futons to Rugs, Decor and much more. **www.DormCo.com/Trunks**

T-SHIRT QUILTS

Campus Quilt turns your t-shirts into an awesome new quilt. We do all the work for you and return your completed t-shirt quilt in as few as two weeks. As featured on ESPN and the Today Show. $129 and up. **www.campusquilt.com • 800.880.8534**

REFINING EYE CREAM + EMU OIL!

A "Selections" product in Oprah magazine! Refreshing, anti-aging Airbrush Eye Refining Treatment hydrates, soothes, reduces crows feet and puffiness, and promotes collagen for younger, brighter looking eyes. **20% off!** Code: **SIM88** at **www.dremu.com 800.542.0026**

THE CALIFORNIA WINE CLUB

Give delicious deliveries of handcrafted wine. Since 1990, The California Wine Club has been delighting recipients with award-winning wine hand-selected from small artisan wineries. Holiday gifts start at $39.95 plus s/h. Send as many months as you wish. Void where prohibited. **CaWineClub.com 800.777.4443**

To advertise in Simply Shopping, contact M.I. Integrated Media at 860.542.5180 • Visit these advertisers online: www.mi-ms.com/simplyshopping

SOCK GRAMS

A cozy, lasting and fun gift delivery option. A Perfect way to send a hug across the miles this holiday season! A great little gift for the whole family. **Save 30% using code SantaSocks**. **www.sockgrams.com** • **888.88SOCKS**

BEST. WALLET. EVER.

The perfect gift – a skinny wallet designed to fit the front pocket. More comfortable, more secure, and holds everything you need. Many made in Maine styles available. Starting at $30.00 **800.786.1768** • **www.rogue-industries.com**

NEED SPACE? DREAM HIGHER!

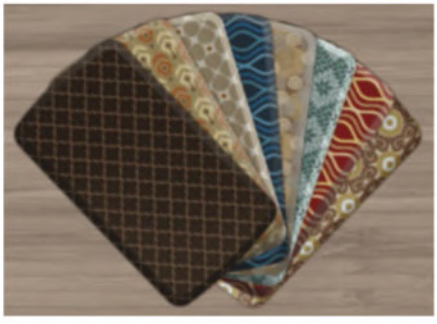
Unique Custom Bed Solutions. Loft & Bunk Bed Designs for youth, teen, college & adults. Custom made space saving beds in twin, full, queen & king. Solid wood. Easy-To-Assemble Kits. Handcrafted in USA. **866.739.2331** **CollegeBedLofts.com/rs**

JADE – NATURE'S BEST YOGA MAT

Jade natural rubber yoga mats have incredible grip, great comfort, are eco-friendly and made in the USA. And Jade plants a tree for every mat sold, over 850,000 so far! Get yours online at **www.jadeyoga.com** and use coupon code **Simple** for **Free Shipping**.

DREMU OIL SERUM!

Better than Botox; 100% pure & natural Triple Refined Emu Oil; promotes collagen; reduces fine lines & wrinkles; heals sun & scar damage; helps Rosacea, Eczema, Psoriasis; in non-clogging, deeply hydrates, evens skin tone! 20% discount code: **SIMP** at **dremu.com** **800.542.0026**



GELPRO® DECORATOR COLLECTION

The world's most comfortable floor mat, constructed with soothing gel and energy-return foam, is now available in hundreds of stylish patterns and colors to fit any décor. Stain resistant and easy-to-clean. Made in the USA. **GelPro.com** • **866.435.6287**

TOUGH
Fast, Fix it
and Forget it
GLUE
GORILLA
SUPER GLUE
IMPACT-TOUGH® FORMULA
Rubber Toughened
Gorilla Super Glue's quick drying, Impact-Tough® formula is a rubber-toughened matrix, providing a strong bond that won't crack under pressure.
For the Toughest Jobs on Planet Earth®
www.gorillatough.com
©2015 The Gorilla Glue Company

To advertise in Simply Shopping, contact M.I. Integrated Media at 860.542.5180 • Visit these advertisers online: www.mi-ms.com/simplyshopping

A Life in Full

AN ENGINEER WITH AN ARMY BACKGROUND WHO IS ALSO A REIKI PRACTITIONER AND A CERTIFIED HERBALIST? THIS MOM OF FOUR DEFINITELY MARCHES TO HER OWN BEAT.

CONNIE MALTBIE-SHULAS, 58

- Manager of the V-22 Osprey Modification and Retrofit Program at the Boeing Company, in Ridley Park, Pennsylvania
- Married to Jim Shulas, with four kids: Logan, 32; Charlie, 30; Chris, 28; and Jesse, 17
- Bayville, New Jersey

VISION QUEST
"I focus on positive outcomes for the day. I'll picture how a meeting could go really well instead of seeing how I could mess it up."

5:30 A.M. "Before my 70-minute commute to work, I gaze into the candles and meditate. At night, I'll write in my journal about what I'm thankful for and what I'm looking forward to."

8:40 A.M. "My department installs modifications to the V-22 Osprey, a Bell Boeing aircraft, for the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps. All team leads check in with each other weekly."

3 SHIFTS SHE'S MADE TO SIMPLIFY HER LIFE

No. 1
"I'm no longer intimidated by what others think of me. After my experience with breast cancer, 19 years ago, I gained confidence to truly be myself."

No. 2
"I try to involve my family in whatever I'm working on at the office. Likewise, I consider the people I work with family. Thanksgiving at my house gets crowded."

No. 3
"I gave up worrying. Instead, I offer my concern to the divine. Often the issue resolves itself."

GOOD VIBES
"I'll calm the energy with a Tibetan singing bowl, which is a brass vessel used in meditation. I've brought it to meetings to clear the air. Coworkers are doubtful at first, but it usually gets us all on the same page."

11:15 A.M. "My director, Carolyn Nichols, and I meet in the factory. It can be challenging being female engineers in a typically male field. I believe we bring something different to the table."

3:25 P.M. "About 60 percent of my time is spent out in the field or out and about around the Boeing campus. My office is my sanctuary—I like to stop there during the day to still my mind."

6:00 P.M. "My daughter, Jesse, is my only child who lives at home. We like to do something together every day after work. Today we picked sunflowers and medicinal herbs at a local farm."

8:45 P.M. "My husband and I made a Rollerblading rink in our basement—it forms a circle around the staircase. So when it gets too dark or cold to go for a run, we can still work out."

Photographs by Fred Troilo

COPYRIGHT © BOEING

ADVERTISEMENT

ON THE FIFTH DAY OF BREAKFAST

...let me count the ways, to help power the family through the holidays. Take the guesswork out of breakfast for the five days leading up to the big day with these meal options from **Quaker** that will keep your crew merry and bright.

DAY ONE

Granola Parfait

The perfect way to enhance that plain Greek yogurt you have sitting in the fridge—sprinkle it with **Quaker Simply Granola** and apple, coconut, and raisins. Layer with fresh fruit.

DAY TWO

Lemon Blueberry Oatmeal Muffins

For those on-the-go, get-in-the-car days, make a batch of **Quaker's Lemon Blueberry Oatmeal Muffins**. They make for a great source of fiber and protein to power you through to lunch.

DAY THREE

Overnight Oats

In single-serving mason jars, scoop 2/3 cup of **Quaker Old Fashioned Oatmeal** and mix with the same amount of your favorite milk—we like almond. Build this tasty morning dish the night before and store in the fridge for a sweet and wholesome breakfast.

DAY FOUR

Oatmeal Bar

Help give the whole family a boost of energy with the endless possibilities of an oatmeal bar. Lay out little bowls of sliced banana, cinnamon, chia seeds, and mini chocolate chips—let the family garnish their own bowl of **Quaker Old Fashioned Oatmeal**.

DAY FIVE

Savory Oats

Sometimes you just want a warm bowl of **Quaker Old Fashioned Oatmeal** to start your day. Switch it up with savory mix-ins like bacon, egg, and cheese as a hearty start to the holidays.

LEMON BLUEBERRY OATMEAL MUFFINS

Serving: 12 | Prep time: 20 min. | Cook time: 18 min.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 3/4 Cups Quaker Oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked), divided
- 2 Tsp. firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 Cup all-purpose flour (add an additional two Tbsp. if using old fashioned oats)
- 1/2 Cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 Tsp. salt (optional)
- 1 Cup skim milk
- 2 Egg whites or 1/4 cup egg substitute with yolk, or one egg
- 2 Tsp. canola oil
- 1 Tsp. grated lemon peel
- 1 Tsp. vanilla
- 1 Cup fresh or frozen blueberries (do not thaw)

PREPARATION

Heat oven to 400° F. Spray 12 medium muffin cups with cooking spray; set aside. For topping, combine 1/4 cup oats and brown sugar; set aside. In large bowl, combine remaining 1 1/2 cups oats with remaining dry ingredients; mix well. In small bowl, combine milk, egg whites, oil, lemon peel, and vanilla; mix well. Add to dry ingredients; stir just until moistened. Do not overmix. Gently stir in berries. Fill muffin cups almost full; sprinkle with topping. Bake 18 to 22 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool muffins in pan on wire rack for 5 minutes. Remove from pan. Serve warm.

Find more breakfast goodness at **QUAKEROATS.COM.**

REALSIMPLE

TOP 7 TIPS ON TIPPING

Follow these expert-approved etiquette rules when showing your appreciation.

1

NO NEED TO WAIT UNTIL CHRISTMAS WEEK.
The entire stretch between Black Friday and New Year's Day is fair game.

2

WORK IN BATCHES.
Start by taking care of the people you see regularly—your sitter, your doorman. See? Your list is shorter already!

3

DO YOUR BEST TO GIVE CASH OR GIFT CARDS.
Checks create work for the recipient—a trip to the ATM. With gift cards, be sure to choose from stores that you know the person uses.

4

PLACE THE TIP IN AN ENVELOPE.
For people who may be receiving a lot of year-end tips (like a hairstylist), be sure to use an envelope and a card or a note to ensure that they're aware of your gift. (You don't want it to get lost in the shuffle.)

5

IN A PINCH? CASH IS OK BY ITSELF.
On the flip side, if you run into someone you meant to tip but forgot about (like the kid who does a great job mowing your lawn in summer), cash with no card works just fine.

6

GIVE WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD.
Don't feel the need to make excuses if you can't manage a tip. Instead, verbalize your appreciation or send a card.

7

OPT FOR CRISP BILLS.
If you have the time, pick up fresh currency from the bank. Your gift will benefit from that extra bump of great presentation.

THE EXPERTS

KIMBERLY BURGAN, director, dog*tec Dog Walking Academy; PATRICIA FITZPATRICK, president, the Etiquette School of New York; DIANE GOTTSMANN, etiquette expert, the Protocol School of Texas; BRIAN JOHNSON, director of education and analysis, Drycleaning & Laundry Institute; JULES MARTINEZ HIRST, etiquette expert, Etiquette Consulting Inc.; JANETTE MICELLI, manager of external corporate communications, Waste Management; ELAINE SWANN, etiquette expert and social commentator; JACQUELINE WHITMORE, founder, the Protocol School of Palm Beach Inc.; WILLIAM WOOD, Christmas-tree vendor.

REALSIMPLE

Holiday-tipping how-to

Keep this guide handy when you're making a list—and checking it twice. (Note: When a range is offered, make a choice that's right for your income.)

CHRISTMAS-TREE CARRIER

A $20 cash tip is appropriate for home delivery; $10 for an attentive carrier who also offers service while you choose a tree; $5 if the person has just helped you bundle it up and load it onto the car.

DAY-CARE STAFF

A gift or a cash tip in the amount of $35 to $70 for each staff member who works with your child(ren) and a small handmade gift from your child(ren).

BABYSITTER

Up to one evening's pay and a small handmade gift from your child(ren).

NANNY/AU PAIR

A cash tip equivalent to one week to one month of service, plus a gift from you.

DOORMAN

$20 to $100, depending on how much assistance they provide during the year. Accepting frequent deliveries calls for a little extra. $15 or more each for multiple doormen or a gift.

SUPER/BUILDING STAFF

$20 to $80 or a gift.

GIFT WRAPPER

If tips are allowed, go with $1 to $2 per package, up to $10 total.

HAIRSTYLIST/MANICURIST

The cost of one salon visit, divided among the staffers who regularly work with you.

LETTER CARRIER

The U.S. Postal Service has regulations about gifts. Carriers are allowed to accept snacks and beverages and small gifts equaling $20 or less (no cash or gift cards). If you give a large snack-based gift (a cookie tin or a fruit basket), technically your carrier must share it with the entire branch.

PACKAGE DELIVERY

A small gift in the $20 range. Most delivery companies discourage or prohibit cash gifts.

PERSONAL TRAINER/ INSTRUCTOR

Up to the cost of one session or a gift.

ELDER-CARE PROVIDER

A cash gift equivalent to one week to one month of salary or a gift.

LAWN CARE/ POOL CLEANER

$20 to $50 each or a gift equivalent.

DOG WALKER/ CAT SITTER

A cash gift equivalent to one day to one week of service.

TEACHER

Check with your district for gift-giving rules. If permitted, give a gift card to a coffee shop or a handmade gift from your child with a personal note. Gifts are less common in middle school and high school, where children tend to have multiple teachers.

TRASH COLLECTOR

Check local regulations for public-service employees. If there are no restrictions, $10 to $25 per person is appropriate. Put the money in a card and tape the envelope to the front of the trash container.

CLEANING PERSON

A cash tip equivalent to one day to one week of service and/or a small gift.

ASSISTANT/ SECRETARY

A gift or a gift card of $50 or more. The value should reflect how long the assistant has been with you and should be separate from any year-end bonus.

MASSAGE THERAPIST/ AESTHETICIAN

A tip equivalent to the cost of one visit.

DOCTOR/THERAPIST

Cash gifts are generally prohibited. Check with each institution's policy before giving a gift to a medical professional. At some nonprofit institutions, a donation may be made in honor of an employee. Platters of cookies or fruit are thoughtful gifts that benefit the entire staff.

MECHANIC

If you go regularly for service, tip $20.

DRY CLEANER

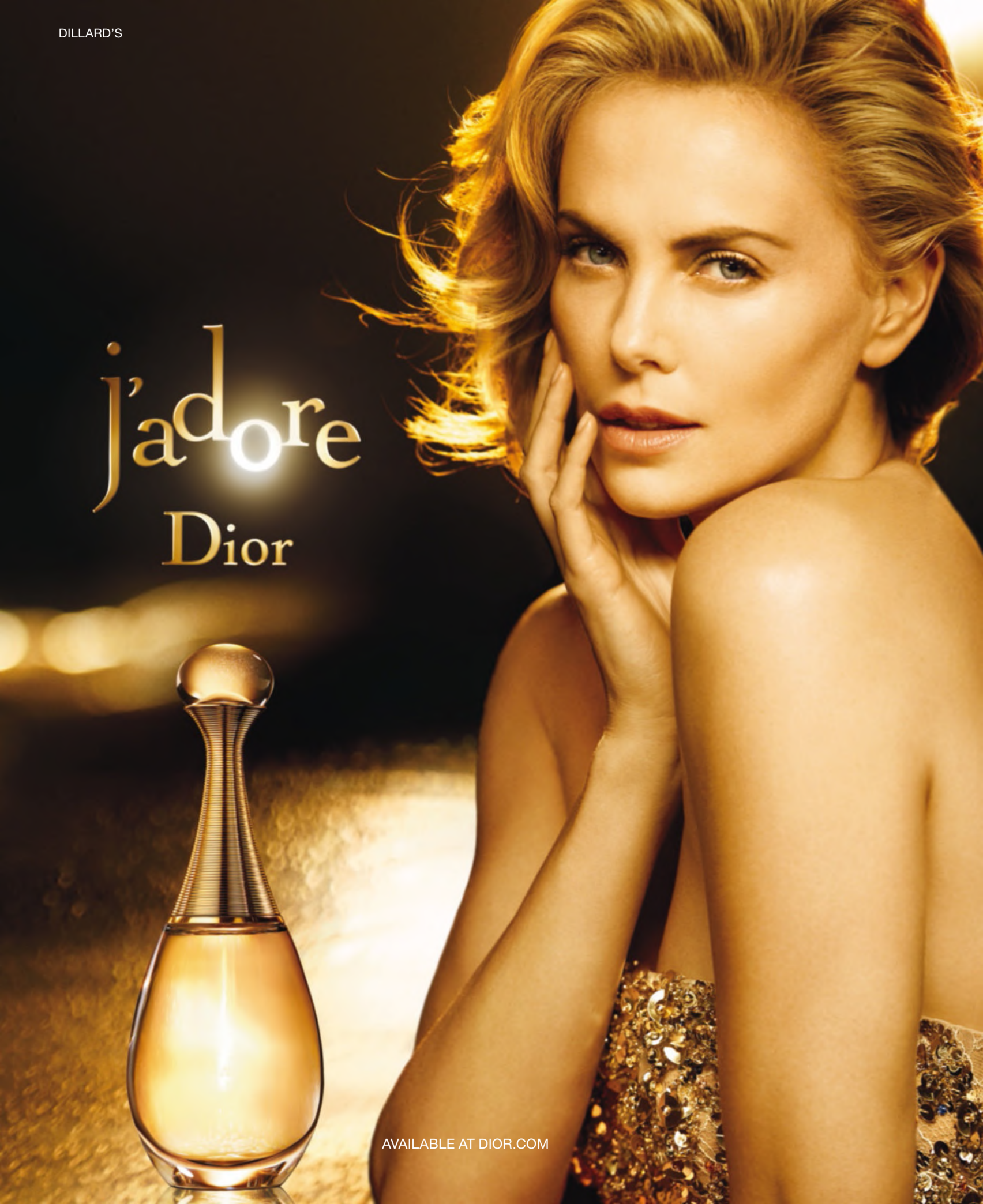
Since it's a team effort, consider dropping off a box of donuts or a basket of fruit for the whole staff to enjoy.

ILLUSTRATION BY EIGHT HOUR DAY

© 2015 Quaker Oats Company

WHAT THE BEST MORNINGS ARE MADE OF.

Start your day on the plus side of delicious with Quaker® Real Medleys.® Try new Summer Berry Granola as a delicious snack or topping that's loaded with crunchy clusters plus real fruit. And there's new Banana Walnut Oatmeal+, complete with super grains and packed with bananas and crunchy nuts. **#QuakerUp**


j'adore
Dior
AVAILABLE AT DIOR.COM